International Atomic Energy Agency
GENERAL CONFERENCE

GC

GC(41)/OR.7
29 May 1998
GENERAL Distr.

Original: ENGLISH

FORTY-FIRST (1997) REGULAR SESSION

RECORD OF THE SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Austria Center Vienna
on Thursday, 2 October 1997, at 10.5 a.m.

President: Mr. NIEWODNICZAŃSKI (Poland)

CONTENTS

Item of the agenda*		Paragraphs
-	Requests for the restoration of voting rights (resumed)	1 - 5
8	General debate and statements marking the 40th anniversary of the Agency (resumed)	6 - 69
	Statements by the delegates of:	
	Kazakhstan	6 - 14
	Poland	15 - 24
	Chile	25 - 29
	Monaco	30 - 35
	Peru	36 - 43
	Ghana	44 - 47
	Bulgaria	48 - 56
	Kuwait	57 - 63
	Portugal	64 - 66
	Myanmar	67 - 69

* GC(41)/28.

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their own copies of documents to meetings.

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(41)/INF/17/Rev.2

97-03913 (XXXIII)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages, in a memorandum and/or incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent to the Division of Languages, International Atomic Energy Agency, Wagramerstrasse 5, P.O. Box 100, A-1400 Vienna, Austria. Corrections should be submitted within three weeks of the receipt of the record.

Item of the agenda*		Paragraphs
9	Election of Members to the Board of Governors	70 - 91
8	General debate and statements marking the 40th anniversary of the Agency (resumed)	92 - 112
	Statements by the delegates of:	
	Zimbabwe	92 - 100
	Ecuador	101 - 104
	Paraguay	105 - 110
	Iraq	111
	Kuwait	112

Abbreviations used in this record

ABACC	Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials
AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Regional Co-operative Arrangements for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America
Basic Safety Standards	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
IRRT	International Regulatory Review Team
LDC	Least developed country
MESA	Middle East and South Asia
NEA	Nuclear Energy Agency (of OECD)
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
PHARE	Poland, Hungary: assistance for economic reconstruction in Europe (the programme now covers several East European countries)
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
SAGTAC	Standing Advisory Group on Technical Assistance and Co-operation
TCDC	Technical co-operation among developing countries
TCF	Technical Co-operation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
TLD	Thermoluminescence dosimetry
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNSCOM	United Nations Special Commission
WWER	Water-cooled and -moderated reactor (former USSR)

REQUEST FOR THE RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS
(GC(40)/INF/21, GC(40)/INF/22)

1. The PRESIDENT said that the General Committee had met that morning and had considered two requests for the restoration of voting rights, from Liberia and Kenya. The Committee had recommended that the voting rights of Liberia and Kenya be restored in accordance with Article XIX.A of the Statute.

2. The Committee's recommendation was accepted.

3. Mr. HEATHCOTE (United Kingdom) said that a number of Member States considered the criteria governing the restoration of voting rights to be somewhat opaque and proposed that the Board be requested to devise criteria which would provide clearer guidance.

4. The PRESIDENT asked the Conference whether it wished, as proposed by the delegate of the United Kingdom, to request the Board to develop some criteria or principles to govern the future consideration of requests for the restoration of voting rights, for acceptance by the Conference at its next session.

5. It was so decided.

GENERAL DEBATE AND STATEMENTS MARKING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AGENCY (resumed)
(GC(41)/8)

6. Mr. SHKOLNIK (Republic of Kazakhstan) congratulated the President of the Conference on his election and extended his compliments to the Agency on the occasion of its 40th anniversary. He thanked the outgoing Director General for the efforts he had made to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and for the invaluable support he had given to Kazakhstan during the difficult period when it was preparing to join the international non-proliferation regime. He also congratulated the new Director General on his appointment and expressed his full confidence in the latter's capacity to pursue in a worthy fashion the efforts of his predecessors.

7. In addition, he welcomed the two new States which had joined the Agency since the preceding session of the General Conference, Malta and Burkina Faso.

8. Kazakhstan was fully committed to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It was a signatory of the NPT and had voted for its indefinite extension, and it had concluded a safeguards agreement with the Agency and signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The Government of Kazakhstan was taking steps to dismantle the fifty-year-old nuclear testing ground at Semipalatinsk, with the co-operation of the Agency. Missions had been dispatched to study the radiation situation with a view to cleaning up the results of many years of nuclear weapons testing at the site.

9. In September 1997, Kazakhstan had hosted an international conference on the problems of nuclear non-proliferation which had been attended by experts from many countries and international organizations, including the IAEA. The address of the participants at the conference to the Agency had been circulated as an official document.

10. His country supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the safeguards system and had begun to implement the Part 1 measures of Programme 93+2. It also supported the efforts of the international community to prevent the spread of military nuclear technology and attached great importance to the role played by the Agency in the field of non-proliferation. The Model Additional Protocol to comprehensive safeguards agreements would undoubtedly promote the more effective detection of undeclared nuclear activities and should generally enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the non-proliferation regime. He congratulated Australia on being the first State to sign an additional protocol and urged others to follow suit. Moreover, he welcomed the initiative of the nuclear powers - in particular the Russian Federation and the United States - in widening the scope of application of safeguards to their nuclear activities and nuclear material under their jurisdiction.

11. Illicit trafficking in nuclear materials was an issue of growing importance to Member States, and Kazakhstan had adopted the Agency's requirements in that field as standards for its own nuclear export and import policy.

12. Like any country with a developing nuclear industry and nuclear power programme, Kazakhstan was searching for acceptable solutions to the problem of radioactive waste management. It needed to develop up-to-date legislation and standards in the field of radiation safety and waste management, and to create the corresponding infrastructure. The Kazakh Government supported the Agency's regional project which aimed at solving such problems by the beginning of the next century. His country had also signed the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. Moreover, it endorsed the Swedish Government's request that the possibility be investigated of combining into one programme, under the aegis of the Joint IAEA/NEA Uranium Group, projects relating to the study of the environmental impact of uranium industry waste, discharges into the air and water, working conditions, radiation safety, decommissioning, and restoration of the environment.

13. Kazakhstan actively participated in Agency technical co-operation projects on the use of nuclear and isotopic techniques in industry, agriculture, medicine, hydrology, and other fields, and was eager to expand those co-operative efforts. It had acquired extensive experience in the use of a fast reactor for sea water desalination which it was willing to share with interested States.

14. In conclusion, he assured the Agency of his country's continued support for its activities.

15. Mr. RYDZKOWSKI (Poland) having welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso to the Agency, said that Poland, as one of the States associated with the European Union, fully

shared the views contained in the statement delivered by the delegate of Luxembourg on behalf of the Union.

16. Poland had participated in the Conference on the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency in October 1956, had ratified its Statute in July 1957 when it had come into force, and had actively participated in the work of the Agency since its inception. Over the past 40 years the Agency had faithfully served the international community, reducing fears and turning expectations concerning the peaceful use of atomic energy into reality.

17. The Agency's promotional work, aimed primarily at the needs of developing countries, had steadily grown in volume. Though itself a beneficiary of the Agency's technical assistance programme, his country did its best to contribute to that programme as well and would continue to do so. Poland regularly provided the Agency with specialists in various fields and was pleased to see that their work seemed to be highly appreciated.

18. The rapid expansion of the commercial market in nuclear material and nuclear facilities in the Agency's early years had obviated the need for its becoming a broker in that market. For various reasons, arrangements for the supply of research reactors and commercial nuclear power plants had been almost exclusively bilateral and had not made use of the mechanism of Agency projects foreseen by the Statute. Under those circumstances, the IAEA had focused its attention on nuclear and radiological safety and safeguarding against the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

19. His delegation would especially like to commend the Secretariat for developing the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel and the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management and the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention, as well as for carrying out preparatory work on the review process under the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Poland had actively participated in the drafting of both the aforementioned international legal instruments and his delegation had just received authorization from the President of the Republic of Poland to sign them during the current session.

20. A strengthened safeguards system was vital to maintaining the Agency's credibility, and the Secretariat and the Board of Governors deserved to be complimented for elaborating the Model Additional Protocol to safeguards agreements which provided for a more rigorous regime.

21. The 40th anniversary of the Agency that year coincided with the completion of 16 years' service by Mr. Blix as Director General of the Agency. Poland was of the opinion that the contribution he had made to enhancing the useful role of the Agency in the world nuclear community was of inestimable value. He had dealt skilfully with serious crises during that period in the crucial areas of nuclear safety and safeguards and, by drawing lessons from those events, had moved the Agency into a position of increasing strength.

22. The Polish delegation wished to thank Mr. Blix very warmly for his generous and untiring service to the nuclear community, and bid him good health and happiness in the future.

23. The Polish Government had given its full support to the appointment by the Board of Governors of Mr. ElBaradei as Director General of the Agency for the four years commencing 1 December 1997. He congratulated him on the unanimous approval by the General Conference of that appointment and wished him a very successful tenure of office. If, as expected, the second wave of expansion of nuclear power arrived, and if further steps were taken on nuclear arms reductions, additional legal instruments would have to be negotiated and Mr. ElBaradei, another distinguished international lawyer with extensive experience of diplomatic service and a profound knowledge of the United Nations system and the international nuclear arena, would have every opportunity to become a worthy successor to the three Directors General who had served the Agency for over 40 years with great distinction.

24. The continuous development of the Polish economy was resulting in a growing demand for electricity despite increased efficiency in its use. Given the desirability of removing the virtual monopoly status of coal as a fuel in the Polish electrical power system, and in view of environmental constraints, there was growing interest in the natural gas and nuclear options. In the preceding year an international seminar had been held in Warsaw on the subject of new-generation nuclear power plants which had generated considerable interest. Poland was grateful to the Agency for the assistance it had provided with that seminar. In that connection, he urged that the question of new, advanced nuclear power plant designs, and in particular their safety and economic aspects, be accorded greater attention in the Agency's programme.

25. Mr. PUCCIO HUIDOBRO (Chile) noted the generally poor attendance at the general debate and suggested that, with a view to saving money, and in line with the current reforms within the United Nations, delegations should simply hand in their general debate statements to the Secretariat at the next session of the Conference and one day should be reserved for Member States to comment on those statements.

26. In the 40 years since the Statute had come into force, years which had seen remarkable developments in the world, the Agency had become one of the most widely respected international organizations. He paid tribute to the outgoing Director General who had played a central role in establishing the Agency in that position of strength. He also congratulated the new Director General on his appointment - the first Director General from a developing country - and applauded the points he had made in his statement, in particular the stress he had laid on the importance of technical co-operation.

27. Chile attached great importance to the Agency's technical co-operation activities. It was the responsibility of all Member States to meet their financial obligations to the Technical Co-operation Fund as far as they were able and, in that context, he applauded the efforts which were being made by several Latin American countries to pay their outstanding contributions. He appealed to donor countries not to reduce the level of their contributions at the very moment when the measures to strengthen technical co-operation were beginning to bear fruit. Subcontracting with a view to making greater use of specialized centres in the region, and to promoting TCDC, should help improve management of resources and lead to

healthy decentralization of technical co-operation activities. Traditional funding mechanisms were unlikely to be able to meet the growing demand for technical assistance, particularly if the level of contributions fell. Therefore it was important to seek new approaches. The private sector was playing an increasingly important role in technological and economic development throughout the world, and opportunities should be created for it to become involved in new technical co-operation approaches. Chile applauded the Secretariat's efforts to modernize and make more flexible the Agency's technical co-operation policy, and welcomed in particular the Model Projects, the Partners in Development concept, and the establishment of SAGTAC. The developing countries had attempted to adapt their national and regional projects to those developments and, with that in mind, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean had taken the decision to convert the ARCAL programme into an intergovernmental agreement.

28. Chile also recognized the importance of the Agency's verification activities and was planning to sign an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement in the near future. Equally, it was interested in the development of legal instruments regulating civil liability for nuclear damage. With regard to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, his delegation felt that a provision should have been included concerning prior notification of States of transit. It was therefore reviewing its reservations concerning Article 27 of that Convention before signing it.

29. Like other non-nuclear-weapon States, Chile had experienced difficulties in its national attempts to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear technology owing to the fears aroused by military applications, in particular where nuclear tests were carried out in locations where there was a threat of environmental damage. His country supported all initiatives aimed at disarmament and was therefore most heartened by the progress which had been made with the setting up of the CTBTO.

30. Mr. PASTORELLI (Monaco) congratulated the President of the Conference on his election and paid tribute to the outgoing Director General, Mr. Blix.

31. For many years, Monaco had followed the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with interest. Many countries clearly found nuclear power to be an economically attractive option. However, like any industrial activity, the development of nuclear power had to be accompanied by a high degree of safety in the operation of facilities, management of radioactive waste and spent fuel, and final disposal of high-level waste to be acceptable. As the Chernobyl accident had shown, the radioactive pollution caused by a major nuclear accident knew no boundaries.

32. Owing to its location, Monaco was particularly concerned over pollution of the marine environment, especially by artificial radionuclides. That concern had prompted Prince Rainier III to host the first international scientific conference on the disposal of radioactive waste on land and at sea in Monaco in 1959. Subsequently in 1961, a tripartite agreement had been concluded between the Agency, the Government of Monaco, and the Monaco Museum of Oceanography, which had led to the setting up of the International Laboratory of Maritime Radioactivity whose main activity had been, initially, the application

of nuclear and isotopic techniques to the study of the behaviour of radionuclides in the marine environment.

33. In 1988, the Laboratory, whose work was highly valued by the international scientific community, had been moved from its original home in the Museum of Oceanography to a site in the district of Fontvieille. Its field of activities had been growing progressively over that period and, in 1991, it had been renamed the Marine Environment Laboratory to reflect that fact. However, the laboratory was already outgrowing its second home and, in October 1998, its new and larger premises in the Port of Monaco would be officially opened. That event had been planned to coincide with the International Symposium on Marine Pollution organized by the Agency, the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, UNEP, and the International Commission for Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea, which would be held in the Monaco Congress Centre.

34. Monaco fully supported the Agency's nuclear safety and radiation protection activities, the safeguards programme, and the advisory role played by the Agency in the combating of illicit trafficking in nuclear material and radioactive sources. It also approved of the Agency's work on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in medicine, agriculture, scientific research and environmental protection. Through the support it gave to the Marine Environment Laboratory, and through the latter's training activities for Agency fellowship holders, it also contributed to the Agency's technical assistance programme. His country had signed the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. It also welcomed the progress which had been made towards achieving consensus on a Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and on amendment of the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage.

35. In conclusion, he noted that nuclear power would play a major role in electricity generation for many years to come, and said he felt sure that the Agency would continue to contribute as effectively as it had in the past to the development of the peaceful uses of atomic energy. It could certainly rely on the support of Monaco for its activities in the field of protection of the marine environment.

36. Mr. CHAUNY de PORTURAS-HOYLE (Peru) associated himself with the comments made by the representative of Chile regarding reorganization of the general debate in line with United Nations reforms. He also welcomed Burkina Faso and Malta as new members of the Agency.

37. The work done by the Agency over the past year was to be commended, especially in the fields of safeguards and nuclear, radiation and waste safety. On behalf of the Peruvian Government he paid tribute to Mr. Blix for his able leadership and for the support he had given to the developing countries, including Peru, during his sixteen years as Director General. Peru was highly appreciative of the Agency's achievements during the first forty years of its existence. Given the great importance of nuclear energy in the world of the future, those achievements were bound to multiply. His country had been an active supporter of the

Agency's objectives, and had decided to mark the Agency's fortieth anniversary by dedicating the annual nuclear technology seminar of the Peruvian Institute of Nuclear Energy to the Agency and its forty years of promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. He felt sure that under its new Director General, Mr. ElBaradei, the Agency would carry on its successful record.

38. Nuclear technology was an essential factor in promoting sustainable improvement in the quality of life of underprivileged sectors of the population and overall development. Peru was grateful to be a beneficiary of the Agency's 1997-98 technical co-operation programme and happy to participate in two of its Model Projects - on child nutrition and the cultivation of barley. Both projects were making extremely satisfactory progress: the former had already generated improvements in the quality of nutrition of two million children in the most deprived areas of Peru; under the latter, work was proceeding on the improvement and delivery to farmers of new varieties of barley and other native cereal crops with a high nutritional value. Notable amongst the bilateral projects currently being carried out by Peru were the joint evaluation with Bolivia of the water resources in the Lake Titicaca basin and the joint activities with Chile aimed at combating the fruit fly and other agricultural pests. Another project with major social impact involved the establishment of a tissue bank which, with the help of nuclear technology, was now providing various sterilized materials for medical use. With respect to staff training, a Master's course in medical physics was reaching its conclusion which should help improve quality levels in hospitals and health centres in the country. In addition, the Peruvian Government had approved new national radiation protection regulations which made it compulsory for hospital centres to employ medical physicists. Agency support had been provided for the construction of a cell for the production of iridium-192 for medical and industrial use. Moreover, nuclear techniques were being used to quantify the environmental impact of mining, metallurgical and power engineering effluents, and Peru now had the capability to perform real-time measurements of probable emissions from the RP-10 reactor under both normal operating and accident conditions.

39. Over the past year Peru had hosted a number of international events organized by the Agency, including a regional workshop on radionuclide and radiopharmaceutical production in November 1996 and a workshop on harmonization of food irradiation regulations in Latin America and the Caribbean in April 1997.

40. As in previous years, Peru had participated in ARCAL activities which were of vital importance to the region. The co-ordinated efforts of various bodies in participating countries had helped improve the efficiency of nuclear applications. The new project requests for the 1999-2000 biennium reflected the priority needs of countries in the region. The Peruvian Government would like to see the ARCAL programme strengthened through an intergovernmental mutual co-operation agreement, under the aegis of the Agency, which should not only help promote nuclear science and technology and their peaceful use but also enhance exploitation of available resources. Finally, concluding his comments on technical co-operation, he warmly thanked the United States of America for its extrabudgetary contributions which had once again made possible the approval of important projects in Peru.

41. His country attached great importance to the strengthening of the safeguards system and, with a view to improving the legal framework governing safeguards activities, was considering early signature of an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency.

42. Peru supported efforts to improve the global safety culture and, in July 1997, had deposited its instrument of ratification of the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Similarly, his Government welcomed the recent approval of the texts of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, and the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage. It was currently undertaking a careful study of those major international instruments.

43. The recent commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Tlatelolco Treaty had coincided with significant progress in the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Peru had taken an active part in those negotiations and had signed the Treaty on the day it had opened for signature. In conclusion, he reconfirmed Peru's support for the aims and objectives of the Tlatelolco Treaty, and its commitment to peace and disarmament.

44. Ms. AGGREY-ORLEANS (Ghana) congratulated Mr. ElBaradei on his appointment as the next Director General of the Agency and paid tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Blix. She also welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members of the Agency.

45. As the Agency celebrated its fortieth anniversary it deserved to be applauded for having helped to ward off the possibility of the extinction of the human race by ensuring that nuclear energy was used only for purposes beneficial to mankind. The current global landscape made it imperative for all nations to support with total dedication the Agency's objectives. Genuine efforts to create prosperity for all could only be sustained and accelerated in an environment where there were no deadly weapons and where there was the will and capability to use atomic energy to stimulate economic growth for the benefit of people. For those reasons Ghana was committed to the objectives of the NPT, the CTBT and the Pelindaba Treaty. It also supported the Agency's programmes and activities relating to safeguards and verification, nuclear safety and waste management, and the transfer of nuclear technology. Her country was particularly interested in the transfer of nuclear and radiation technologies for the effective handling of waste, and for improving food supplies and the provision of safe drinking water.

46. With the assistance of the Agency, the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission was training its staff in foreign universities and institutions and had itself offered training to personnel from other Member States. The first phase of the National Radiotherapy and Nuclear Medicine Project in Accra, on which work had started three years previously, would soon be commissioned thanks to a US $3 million Agency contribution in terms of equipment, expertise and human resource development; work had already started on the project's second phase in Kumasi, and the third phase in Tamale would soon be under way. The three centres would provide treatment for cancer patients in Ghana and the West African sub-region. Her country

gratefully acknowledged the support given to the project by the United States of America and China. The Ghana Atomic Energy Commission was also producing radiopharmaceuticals for diagnostic purposes, for the investigation of iron deficiency anaemia, vitamin A deficiency and iodine deficiency. The Department of Food Science and Nuclear Agriculture Research of the Biotechnology and Nuclear Agriculture Research Institute, a unit of the Commission, was utilizing irradiation for the preservation of foodstuffs and the sterilization of hospital equipment, with the assistance of the Agency. Moreover, the Department of Plant and Soils Sciences was producing healthy seedlings and plantlets for important crops. However, the Commission's capacity to transform the country's food situation in order to forestall famine and hunger needed to be strengthened with appropriate support. The Commission's research reactor was being used for work in many areas including environmental monitoring and, under AFRA, to teach reactor core calculations. Consultancy and analytical services were also provided on environmental issues.

47. In conclusion, she reconfirmed Ghana's unflagging interest in, and support for the Agency's programmes.

48. Mr. KASTCHIEV (Bulgaria) thanked the outgoing Director General for the contribution he had made to the international prestige of the Agency and wished the new Director General every success. He also associated himself with the statement which had been made by the representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union and associated countries, including Bulgaria.

49. Bulgaria had been pleased with the results of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. The decisions taken there had far-reaching consequences for the Agency's work in the fields of safeguards and the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In that context, he noted that no indication of diversion of nuclear material or misuse of nuclear facilities, equipment or non-nuclear material had been found in 1996. He also applauded the approval by the Board of the Model Additional Protocol to safeguards agreements. His country had always supported the Agency's efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of its safeguards system, was already implementing Part 1 of Programme 93+2, and was preparing to conclude an additional protocol to its own bilateral safeguards agreement with the Agency. National control of nuclear exports was another important means of preventing nuclear proliferation. As a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee, Bulgaria felt that research into, and production and use of, nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with Article IV of the NPT should conform with the non-proliferation objectives set forth in Articles I and II of that Treaty.

50. The problems of illicit trafficking in nuclear material and other radioactive substances remained on the international community's agenda since they constituted a challenge to the non-proliferation regime and a hazard to public safety. Although the primary responsibility for preventing illicit trafficking lay at the national level, the importance of international co-operation and the Agency's role in facilitating such co-operation was increasing. The programme for preventing and combating illicit trafficking in nuclear material agreed upon at the Moscow Nuclear Safety and Security Summit was expected to strengthen international

co-operation in that area. His country was also pleased to note that the Agency's illicit trafficking database was already operational and that other measures were being contemplated.

51. The Agency had contributed greatly to the development and strengthening of the international regime on the safe use of nuclear energy in the preceding year. The entry into force in October 1996 of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and the recent adoption of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage were notable achievements in that area. Although Bulgaria had signed the Final Acts of those Conventions, its current economic difficulties did pose significant problems as regards their implementation.

52. The Agency had also done much to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in Member States through the transfer of nuclear technology, training of specialists and provision of assistance and equipment. He congratulated the Secretariat on the results achieved in implementing the technical co-operation programme and thanked the Agency for the assistance it had provided to his country in national and regional projects.

53. His country supported the proposed budget for 1998, but he appealed to the Secretariat to undertake additional measures to ensure that most effective use was being made of financial resources. In particular, the recommendations of the External Auditor should be implemented. With regard to the financing of technical assistance, Bulgaria would be paying the equivalent of $10 000 in national currency into the TCF for 1998.

54. Nuclear power played an important role in the Bulgarian economy and the Kozloduy nuclear power plant had produced approximately 42% of the total amount of electricity generated in the country in 1996 . Bulgaria devoted a great deal of attention to nuclear safety and radiation protection problems, in particular to the enhancement of safe operation at the Kozloduy nuclear plant, strengthening of the effectiveness and independence of the national safety inspectorate, and the development of national nuclear legislation and its harmonisation with the legislation of the European Union. The Agency had provided considerable assistance by training Bulgarian inspectors. Moreover, as part of a technical co-operation project, an IRRT mission was to be conducted the results of which would be used to enhance the effectiveness of the Bulgarian Nuclear Safety Authority. As a country operating WWER-type reactors, Bulgaria was also very interested in the Agency's extrabudgetary programme on the safety of WWERs which could be extended to co-ordinate the planning and technical assistance required for upgrading and modernizing the units. In recent years, a number of safety measures had been carried out to improve the safety level at the Kozloduy nuclear power plant. A programme to ensure safe operation of the unit 1 reactor pressure vessel during the rest of its lifetime had been implemented in 1996 and the results clearly showed that the pressure vessel could be operated safely for several years to come without any additional technical measures. The elaboration of a comprehensive programme to enhance the safety of units 1-4 of the Kozloduy nuclear power plant had begun in May 1996. Its aim was to eliminate design shortcomings and the first draft was currently being assessed. In addition, an

upgrading programme had been developed to ensure safe operation of units 5 and 6 of the plant. The proposals and recommendations of the Agency experts invited to review the programme had been incorporated, and it was to be implemented by a consortium of German, Russian and French companies, as well as by Westinghouse and the plant.

55. Turning to the issues of radiation protection and the environment, he said that a modern system for permanent monitoring of the radiation and meteorological conditions in the country had been delivered and installed with the financial support of the European Union's PHARE programme. Furthermore, a computer network had been set up in the regulatory body to process, analyse and record information on the use of radioactive sources in scientific research, medicine, industry and agriculture.

56. In conclusion, he confirmed his Government's support for the Agency's activities and wished the Director General and his staff every success in their work.

57. Mr. AL-GHAIS (Kuwait) praised the leadership of Mr. Blix to whom the Agency owed much of its reputation for efficiency and good management, and wished Mr. ElBaradei every success as the new Director General. The year leading up to the Agency's fortieth anniversary had witnessed some notable achievements, such as the conclusion of the Model Additional Protocol to safeguards agreements, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage; and the Director General and the Secretariat had every reason to be proud. He also welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members of the Agency.

58. The countries of the Middle East looked forward to the establishment in that region of a nuclear-weapon-free zone but, for that goal to be achieved, Israel had to join the NPT and submit its nuclear installations to Agency safeguards, and Iraq had to abandon its irresponsible behaviour. Kuwait looked forward to a Middle East free of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction. Kuwait's position regarding Article VI of the Agency's Statute was that changes should be made to accommodate the least represented regions on the Board of Governors, especially the MESA Group and the African Group, but that the responsibility for deciding upon the composition of regional groups lay with the groups themselves.

59. The General Conference had before it four documents on Iraq's implementation of the Security Council resolutions relating to its aggression against Kuwait on 2 August 1990. Those documents made it clear that Iraq had not fulfilled its obligation under Security Council resolution 687(1991) to make a full declaration to the Agency of its nuclear programme within 15 days. Indeed, six and a half years had elapsed without it doing so, despite the Agency's tireless efforts. It had used delay, omission, obstruction and concealment tactics and, as was stated in paragraph 6 of document GC(41)/20, its minimalist approach in withholding from the Agency all but the minimum necessary information had resulted in the expenditure of considerable additional time and effort.

60. It was astounding that the Government of Iraq had not abandoned its practice of obstructing the Agency's inspectors despite repeated warnings both from the Agency and from

the Security Council. In February 1997, Iraq had prevented the IAEA and UNSCOM inspection teams from using the fixed-wing aircraft required for the inspection missions. The Director General of the Agency had expressed his grave concern over that incident in a meeting with the Iraqi Foreign Minister in March 1997. Moreover, paragraph 28 of the Appendix to document GOV/INF/810 stated that, as a result of that instance of obstructive behaviour, it was impossible to consider the monitoring and verification plan to be fully operational. Iraq had also obstructed joint UNSCOM and IAEA inspection teams on a number of occasions in June 1997, prompting yet another Security Council resolution condemning its actions and threatening to impose additional measures against Iraqi officials. Undeterred, Iraq had delayed and threatened two UNSCOM inspection teams in September 1997, forcing another Security Council warning. The latter incident was of relevance to the Agency since there was evidence that the Iraqi authorities had moved and concealed materials and documents during September, fully justifying Kuwait's suspicion that some of those documents were nuclear-related. The incidents placed in doubt the sincerity of the Iraqi authorities when they promised to co-operate with the Director General of the Agency and the new Chairman of UNSCOM.

61. An example of the way in which Iraqi officials either refused to co-operate with the Agency, despite attempts to give the opposite impression, or did not reveal the facts, was given in paragraphs 4 and 5 of document GC(41)/20 which reported a failure to supply the Agency with a requested summary of achievements giving a description of Iraq's capabilities. Paragraph 8 of the same document described an attempt to conceal the involvement of the Iraqi General Intelligence Service (Mukhabarat) in clandestine procurement. Kuwait urged the Agency to take the utmost care in monitoring Iraqi purchases in order to prevent the import of dual-use equipment which might be used for Iraq's nuclear programme. Countries exporting such equipment had a great political and moral responsibility to prevent its acquisition by Iraq, and to co-operate closely with the Agency in implementing the export-import mechanism adopted via Security Council resolution 1051(1996).

62. Iraq was trying to achieve two goals at the same time: to have the international embargo lifted, and to hide the greatest possible amount of materials and information from the Agency and UNSCOM. The progress the Agency had made in the past six and a half years was due to its own efforts and not to co-operation by the Iraqi authorities. Hence, the Agency should be extremely vigilant in carrying out its mandate in Iraq, because the Iraqi regime had not abandoned its aggressive intentions towards Kuwait and the other countries in the region, and should take the utmost care in preparing its semi-annual reports to the Security Council.

63. Finally, he paid tribute to the late Professor Zifferero who had led the Agency's Action Team, and assured its new leader, Mr. Dillon, of Kuwait's unlimited trust and support.

64. Mr. MENDONÇA E MOURA (Portugal) welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members of the Agency.

65. His country had been a member of the Agency since its establishment 40 years ago and was proud of the latter's success in the fields of technical co-operation, safeguards, nuclear safety, the development of guidelines and regulations on such matters as the handling and

transport of radioactive material, and the promotion of the development of legal instruments such as the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, and the Model Additional Protocol to safeguards agreements. He urged all States to adhere to those instruments as soon as possible which were very important for the promotion and general strengthening of a nuclear safety culture. The Agency's impressive record was due in large part to the dedication of its successive Directors General and their teams. In that context, he commended the outgoing Director General, Mr. Blix, and congratulated his successor, Mr. ElBaradei, on his appointment.

66. He commended the Secretariat's efforts to improve the efficiency of technical co-operation activities and noted with interest that only 36% of the Agency's expenditure on technical co-operation went to projects related to electricity production, radiation and nuclear safety, the fuel cycle and radioactive waste, whereas 64% went to such sectors as food, agriculture, health, earth sciences, industry and the physical and chemical sciences. The general public tended to think of nuclear energy only in terms of atomic bombs, nuclear accidents and radioactive waste, and should be made more aware of the full range of applications. In particular, he stressed the importance of projects connected with the production of potable water and water resource management. Significant efforts were also being made to improve the effectiveness of safeguards, and the adoption of the Model Additional Protocol was a welcome step forward in that regard.

67. Mr. NGWE (Myanmar) commended the Agency's achievements over the past 40 years and congratulated both the outgoing Director General, Mr. Blix, and his successor, Mr. ElBaradei. An RCA working group meeting had been held in his country in March 1997 which had coincided with the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of that Agreement. As part of the celebrations an exhibition had been held on the subject of nuclear science and technology which had emphasized the Agency's role and had been very successful in generating public awareness of its work.

68. Myanmar was committed to actively participating in the United Nations and other multilateral and regional fora, as well as to promoting nuclear science and technology. It had established a separate Ministry of Science and Technology in October 1996, and a Department of Atomic Energy within that Ministry in July 1997. It was also a strong advocate of global nuclear disarmament and had signed the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. Moreover, although it was not yet a party to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, it was giving the matter careful consideration.

69. The Agency's technical co-operation activities in Myanmar were progressing satisfactorily though there was much room for expansion. His country was particularly appreciative of the Agency's work on the use of isotope hydrology for water resource management, and the plan for producing potable water economically which could be particularly helpful in the country's central dry region. Myanmar was also planning to launch a project on radiation technology development and was grateful to the Agency for providing

assistance in the form of a pre-project mission; with further assistance the project could become a success.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
(GC(41)/6, GC(41)/30)

70. The PRESIDENT recalled that in 1989 the General Conference had approved a procedure whereby, when there was agreement regarding the candidate or candidates from a particular area, no secret ballot was held; balloting only took place for those areas where no candidate had been agreed upon. That procedure considerably facilitated the efficient use of the Conference's time.

71. Accordingly, he proposed that Rule 79 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, which provided that elections to the Board should be by secret ballot, be suspended in respect of those areas for which there was agreement.

72. He then drew attention to document GC(41)/6 which contained a list of the Agency Member States which the Board of Governors had designated to serve on the Board from the end of the current session of the Conference to the end of the next session.

73. Under Rule 83 of the Rules of Procedure, the presiding officer had to indicate to the General Conference those elective places on the Board which had to be filled. In that connection, he drew attention to document GC(41)/30 and noted that agreement had been reached among the Member States in all areas except Africa and the Middle East and South Asia. In the case of Africa, there were two seats to be filled and more than two candidates had been put forward. In the case of the Middle East and South Asia, there was one seat to be filled, and more than one candidate had been put forward. A secret ballot would therefore have to be held in respect of both those areas.

74. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Mexico and Peru to the two vacant seats for Latin America.

75. Mexico and Peru were duly elected.

76. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Italy and Sweden to the two vacant seats for Western Europe.

77. Italy and Sweden were duly elected.

78. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Hungary and Slovenia to the two vacant seats for Eastern Europe.

79. Hungary and Slovenia were duly elected.

80. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect Viet Nam to the vacant seat for the Far East.

81. Viet Nam was duly elected.

82. The PRESIDENT took it that the General Conference wished to elect the Republic of Korea, from the area of the Far East, to fill the so-called "floating" seat.

83. The Republic of Korea was duly elected.

84. The PRESIDENT invited the General Conference to proceed with a vote by secret ballot for the two vacant seats for Africa and the vacant seat for the Middle East and South Asia.

85. Mr. TIWARI (India), speaking on behalf of the Middle East and South Asia Group, said that the election of members from that Group to serve on the Board had been a contentious issue in the past and it had not always been in a position to put forward the right number of candidates. He was happy to announce that the Group had agreed to put forward Pakistan for the vacant seat, on the understanding that when the next vacancy fell due Saudi Arabia would be nominated. It would also strive to avoid any need for elections on its candidate in the future.

86. The PRESIDENT, noting the comments of the representative of India, took it that the General Conference wished to elect Pakistan to the vacant seat for the Middle East and South Asia.

87. Pakistan was duly elected.

88. The PRESIDENT then invited the General Conference to proceed with a vote by secret ballot for the two vacant seats for Africa.

89. A secret ballot was held to fill the two seats for Africa.

90. At the suggestion of the President, a member of the delegation of the Czech Republic, a member of the Peruvian delegation and a member of the Finnish delegation were appointed as tellers.

91. The PRESIDENT, noting that the counting of the votes would take some time, suggested that the General Conference should resume the general debate until the results could be announced. He also thanked the tellers, on behalf of all delegates, for their kind co-operation.

GENERAL DEBATE AND STATEMENTS MARKING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AGENCY (resumed)
(GC(41)/8)

92. Mr. NSIMBI (Zimbabwe) commended Mr. Blix for his tireless efforts during his period of office. The conferment on him of the title of Director General Emeritus was a fitting tribute to his sterling work at the Agency. He also joined previous speakers in welcoming Mr. ElBaradei as the new Director General.

93. For the past ten years, the Government of Zimbabwe had recognized the role played by the peaceful application of nuclear techniques in promoting its economic development in the fields of agriculture, human health and water resources. The impact of nuclear techniques in those areas had stimulated interest from other national institutions. At the same time, the country needed a sound radiation protection infrastructure and well-trained staff to maintain the momentum achieved, ensure the steady growth of technical co-operation activities, and improve the effectiveness of project implementation.

94. Under the 1997 technical co-operation programme, Zimbabwe had made progress with the implementation of activities under the Model Project on increased crop production for smallholders through the use of biofertilizers and the current results were promising. Use of that technique should be extended to improve productivity in other cash crops.

95. With regard to the project on tsetse control programmes employing the sterile insect technique, baseline data had been compiled in preparation for the Matusadona Game Reserve pilot project. If the tsetse fly were successfully eradicated in the Matusadona Game Park and the surrounding areas of the Zambezi Valley, the Zimbabwean Government would be in a position to consider plans to increase the level of economic and social activities.

96. Efforts were continuing to upgrade the national radiation protection infrastructure in order to meet the requirements of the Basic Safety Standards. The Government of Zimbabwe was committed to increasing the level of support to the country's radiation protection unit with a view to achieving effective operations by January 1998.

97. The establishment of a new isotope hydrology laboratory, as part of the country's groundwater development activities, should strengthen analytical capabilities in the water sector. Zimbabwe expected to make greater progress in water development as it progressively introduced nuclear techniques alongside conventional techniques.

98. He welcomed the completion of the restructuring exercise in the Agency's Department of Technical Co-operation and hoped that it would enhance programme delivery to recipient Member States. The beneficiaries of the technical co-operation programme appreciated the concepts and tools which the Department had introduced to improve planning and management. The changes would also bring with them new challenges for recipient countries. In addition, he noted with interest the proposed funding mechanisms which would assist some national projects with partial funding. An arrangement of that kind should result in closer interaction between donors and beneficiaries and might also promote TCDC. He also announced that Zimbabwe had begun to redress its assessed programme costs arrears and was committed to meeting its obligations in that regard.

99. Turning to the amendment of Article VI of the Statute, he said that his delegation had followed with interest the work of the Board on that issue and hoped that the General Conference would find a satisfactory solution. In that connection, the African proposal merited serious consideration.

100. In conclusion, he announced that Zimbabwe had completed the majority of its internal ratification formalities for the Pelindaba Treaty.

101. Mr. SUÁREZ (Ecuador) welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members of the Agency and, on behalf of the President and Government of Ecuador, commended the outstanding achievements of Mr. Blix over the past 16 years and wished him every success in the future. The Agency's prestige, the changes which had taken place within it, and the assistance which it had given to the developing countries owed much to his efforts, vision and wisdom. He also welcomed Mr. ElBaradei as the new Director General. It was the first time someone from a developing country had held the most senior post in the Agency and he could count on the full support of Ecuador in his future tasks.

102. Looking back over its 40-year history, the Agency's most important achievement had undoubtedly been the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons through its safeguards programme and relevant treaties. World peace was mankind's most precious possession. Support for the development and application of nuclear technology had been universal, and countries throughout the world had benefited from its use in health, agriculture, environmental protection, industry and power generation. With the help of the Agency and its experts, professionals from developing countries had received training through courses, seminars, symposia and workshops. Without that support, and the materials, equipment and information which had been provided, the progress made by the LDCs in medicine, agriculture and environmental protection would not have been possible. One particular problem in LDCs was the lack of adequate, permanent and reliable supplies of potable water, and his country therefore welcomed the Agency's work on the production of potable water economically.

103. Arguably the Agency's greatest success had been the bringing together of the Latin American countries under the ARCAL programme to implement projects designed to promote the development of the region. The Partners in Development concept had boosted co-operation between countries in the region which should be further strengthened by the joint resolution of common problems. His country was deeply grateful to the Agency for the support it had given the ARCAL programme. Ecuador currently held the Presidency of ARCAL and hoped that, in the near future, an intergovernmental agreement would be signed for the promotion of nuclear science and technology in Latin America and the Caribbean which would strengthen assistance between countries and greatly benefit their populations.

104. The Agency's fortieth anniversary coincided with the thirtieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Tlatelolco Treaty and the fifth anniversary of ABACC. Both those organizations and the Treaty had been a major influence in promoting the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy at world, regional and sub-regional level. Ecuador supported the strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system as the best possible way of promoting nuclear non-proliferation, but there was still a need to strengthen the Agency's technical assistance programme for developing countries. Ecuador had sponsored a resolution on the latter subject and hoped that the programme would be strengthened in the near future in view of the great benefits it brought to Third-World countries.

105. Ms. ROMERO de GONZALEZ (Paraguay) welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members of the IAEA.

106. The Agency, which was currently celebrating its fortieth anniversary, was the only organization whose principal role was to promote worldwide the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It worked together with all the main United Nations agencies in such fields as human health, food safety, pollution control, fresh water resources, climate change, power generation, and other essential areas affecting economic development and the environment. Paraguay had joined the Agency in 1957 and was confident that, with the assistance of the agencies of the United Nations system and other organizations, it would continue to ensure that nuclear energy was used for sustainable development and for the benefit of mankind.

107. The Paraguayan National Atomic Energy Commission had just held a commemorative nuclear science day to present the results obtained by various public and private institutions which had participated in and benefited from national technical co-operation projects, the ARCAL programme, regional projects and research contracts. The Nuclear Information Centre of the Commission had had its own home page on the Internet since July 1997 through which it pursued its publicization activities, with the help of the National Computer Centre of the National University of Asunción.

108. Paraguay welcomed the progress which had been made in the field of technical co-operation and transfer of nuclear technology, and fully supported the Model Project and Partners in Development concepts which were being employed in its own national project on sustainable water resources management. Another valuable project for her country was the one on feed supplementation to improve cattle productivity which was providing support to small-scale milk producers. The National Atomic Energy Commission attached great importance to the interregional project on upgrading of radiation protection infrastructure, an area in which every country had a role to play in order to ensure the safe use of radiation and the safe management of radioactive waste. It was also working together with the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare on the elaboration of appropriate legislation and regulatory controls with a view to preventing accidents and their costly consequences.

109. Her country continued to participate actively in the ARCAL programme. Several of the projects under that programme had fully achieved their objectives, such as the one on maintenance of nuclear instrumentation. Under the project on radiopharmacy, an attempt was being made to include that subject in the pharmacy curriculum of the National University of Asunción. In addition, as part of the project on improvement of radiotherapy practice, physicists were being encouraged to train in medical physics. Analysis services were being offered for various types of samples employing X-ray fluorescence, neutron activation analysis, and gamma spectrometry. In the field of radiation protection, efforts were being made to double the number of people using TLD dosimeters and to ensure compliance with the Basic Safety Standards, in conjunction with the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare. With regard to training, the National Atomic Energy Commission was providing courses on radiation protection, nuclear analytical techniques and electronics for industry, with

the assistance of technicians, professionals and students from the National University of Asunción.

110. In conclusion, she reaffirmed her country's full support for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and international co-operation for development, and its strong opposition to the use of nuclear energy for military purposes. Paraguay's commitment to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the strengthening of the safeguards system remained unwavering. She also thanked the Agency for its continuous efforts to respond to the challenges it had been faced with in the nuclear field over the 40 years it had been in existence.

111. Mr. FARIS (Iraq), responding to the comments which had been made by the representative of Kuwait, said that he was dismayed to find his brother delegation from Kuwait introducing political issues into the discussions which had no place inside the Agency since it was a purely technical organization. He therefore appealed to delegations not to raise political issues.

112. Mr. AL-GHAIS (Kuwait), responding to the comments of the representative of Iraq, noted that that representative had referred to Kuwait as a brother delegation. However, actions spoke louder than words and brothers did not behave to one another as Iraq had behaved towards Kuwait. Moreover, the Conference had just witnessed the behaviour of the representative of Iraq who had banged on the table when requesting the right to respond to the comments made by his own delegation. The Iraqi delegation had indulged in similar behaviour in other meetings in other organizations, sometimes even resorting to physical assault. He requested the Iraqi delegation to refrain from such behaviour in future.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

[IAEA/]
GC(41)/
OR.8

Readex
Fiche

GC

GC(41)/OR.8
2 June 1998
GENERAL Distr.
ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

International Atomic Energy Agency
GENERAL CONFERENCE

FORTY-FIRST (1997) REGULAR SESSION

RECORD OF THE EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Austria Center Vienna
on Thursday, 2 October 1997, at 3.15 p.m.

President: Mr. NIEWODNICZAŃSKI (Poland)
later: Mr. AL-GHAIS (Kuwait)

CONTENTS

Item of the agenda*		Paragraphs
9	Election of Members to the Board of Governors (resumed)	1 - 4
8	General debate and statements marking the 40th anniversary of the Agency (resumed)	5 - 67
	Statements by the delegates of:	
	Uzbekistan	5 - 8
	Yemen	9 - 12
	Italy	13 - 24
	Armenia	25 - 36
	Ethiopia	37 - 43
	Greece	44 - 56
	Venezuela	57 - 67

* GC(41)/28.

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their own copies of documents to meetings.

The composition of delegations attending the session is given in document GC(41)/INF/17/Rev.2

97-04878 (XXXIII)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages, in a memorandum and/or incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent to the Division of Languages, International Atomic Energy Agency, Wagramerstrasse 5, P.O. Box 100, A-1400 Vienna, Austria. Corrections should be submitted within three weeks of the receipt of the record.

Item of the agenda*		Paragraphs
9	Election of Members to the Board of Governors (resumed)	68 - 70
8	General debate and statements marking the 40th anniversary of the Agency (resumed)	71 - 95
	Statements by the delegates of:	
	Kenya	71 - 86
	Estonia	87 - 95
9	Election of Members to the Board of Governors (resumed)	96 - 99
8	General debate and statements marking the 40th anniversary of the Agency (resumed)	100 - 168
	Statements made by the delegates of:	
	Algeria	100 - 107
	Tunisia	108 - 115
	Burkina Faso	116
	Namibia	117 - 122
	Uruguay	123 - 127
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	128 - 132
	Cyprus	133 - 140
	United Republic of Tanzania	141 - 149
	Jordan	150 - 155
	Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean	156 - 163
	Arab Atomic Energy Agency	164 - 166
	League of Arab States	167 - 168

Abbreviations used in this record

AFRA	African Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Regional Co-operative Arrangements for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America
Bangkok Treaty	Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone
Basic Safety Standards	International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Community
G-7	Group of Seven [leading industrial countries]
GDP	Gross domestic product
IPPAS	International Physical Protection Advisory Service
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
KEDO	Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization
LDC	Least developed country
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
NPT Review and Extension Conference	Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OPANAL	Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
Pelindaba Treaty	African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
Rarotonga Treaty	South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty
RCA	Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (for Asia and the Pacific)
TACIS	Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States
TCF	Technical Co-operation Fund
Tlatelolco Treaty	Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (resumed)
(GC(41)/6)

1. The PRESIDENT announced the result of the ballot to the General Conference.

2. In the election of two members from the area of Africa, the result was:

Abstentions:	3
Valid votes:	199
Required majority:	50
Votes obtained:	
Morocco	68
Ghana	49
Sudan	34
Algeria	31
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	17

3. Morocco, having obtained the required majority, was elected to the Board.

4. Since only one of the two elective places had been filled in the ballot, the General Conference would have to proceed to a second ballot in conformity with Rule 81 of its Rules of Procedure in order to fill the other elective place for the area of Africa.

GENERAL DEBATE AND STATEMENTS MARKING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AGENCY (resumed)
(GC(41)/8)

5. Mr. SHAIKOV (Uzbekistan), after congratulating Malta and Burkina Faso on their admission to the Agency, paid tribute to Mr. Blix for his impressive contribution to the development of the organization and congratulated Mr. ElBaradei on his appointment to the post of Director General.

6. The decision of the States of Central Asia to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region, and the international conference on the subject held in Tashkent on 15 and 16 September 1997, bore witness to the efforts being made by Uzbekistan and the other countries of Central Asia to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime. That conference, in which more than 200 representatives of 60 States and 16 international organizations had participated, had led to a number of conclusions.

7. The first was that nuclear security should be considered as an integral part of a comprehensive security system and that it was essential to strike a balance between the obligations of nuclear-weapon States and those of non-nuclear-weapon States in order to

ensure the reliable functioning of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Secondly, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone was not sufficient to guarantee security: an effective control mechanism, based on international experience, would also have to be set up. Thirdly, in establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone, the participating States undertook to adhere to the comprehensive regime of non-proliferation and disarmament. Fourthly, the conference had underlined the specific advantages for the population, in terms of sustainable development, environment and health, of the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Fifthly, the creation of such a zone in Central Asia was in line with previous efforts undertaken to safeguard regional security. Lastly, the establishment of the zone was not a mere symbolic act, and effective physical protection mechanisms would have to be put in place in accordance with international law.

8. The work of the expert groups which had met at the Tashkent conference had led to a joint statement by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In that statement, the Ministers had expressed the view that the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia was an essential step to strengthen regional security; had approved the principles and objectives adopted at the NPT Review and Extension Conference; had welcomed the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and invited all States to sign it; had expressed their satisfaction at the large number of countries which had voluntarily assumed commitments under agreements on nuclear-weapon-free zones; had indicated their belief that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia met the interests of national, regional and global security; had called upon the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and on other States to support the establishment of such a zone in Central Asia; had urged other States to provide assistance in the rehabilitation of territories, particularly those contaminated by radioactive wastes; and, lastly, had requested agencies of the United Nations to set up a group of experts with the participation of representatives of the region to elaborate the details of the agreement to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia.

9. Mr. MAKKI (Yemen) welcomed the admission of Malta and Burkina Faso to membership of the Agency, congratulated Mr. ElBaradei on his appointment to the post of Director General, and paid tribute to Mr. Blix. He stressed the importance of the indefinite extension of the NPT and of the signing of the CTBT, and reiterated his country's support for the steps taken by the Agency under Programme 93+2 to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of the safeguards system, as well as its support for measures designed to strengthen international co-operation in the fields of nuclear, radiation and waste safety, and for measures to combat illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and other radiation sources.

10. With regard to the financing of technical co-operation, Yemen was in favour of any solution which would strengthen the activities carried out in that area, whether through the Technical Co-operation Fund or under the Regular Budget. The issue had become a matter of urgency because the Agency needed to strike a proper balance between its various activities. Similarly, although the achievement of zero real growth in the budget for 1998 was to be welcomed, it was to be hoped that it was the result of savings achieved through administrative

reforms and not the result of a reduction in the Agency's programmes, particularly in activities in support of technical co-operation projects.

11. Yemen had undertaken a wide-ranging programme of financial, administrative and economic reforms, and was in the process of elaborating a legal framework which would enable it to develop further its relations with the Agency in the near future. It intended to sign a comprehensive safeguards agreement and to ratify or accede to international conventions concluded under the auspices of the Agency. He hoped that the Agency would provide his country with support that was urgently needed in view of the shortage of qualified personnel, equipment, laboratories and materials. The Agency's support was also crucial in such fields as radiation protection, medicine, the environment and hydrology.

12. Yemen welcomed the results achieved by the Agency in the application of safeguards and in the implementation of Security Council resolutions, and hoped that it would make progress in the application of safeguards in the Middle East, with the objective of denuclearizing the region and eliminating all weapons of mass destruction. It was now clear to all that Israel's obstinacy was detrimental to the noble aspirations of the peoples of the region, and that its intrigues bore witness to its defiance of international resolutions and conventions and threatened the stability and security of the region and beyond. Accordingly, the international community was called upon to take the necessary steps to force Israel to conform to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly and to implement the Madrid and Oslo agreements, as well as the agreements concluded with the Palestinian Authority and neighbouring countries. The Agency was likewise urged to take the necessary steps to induce Israel to sign the NPT and place its nuclear facilities under safeguards and to make sure that it did not develop nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction. In doing so, the Agency should show the same resolve and determination as it had in the case of Iraq. If that were not done, it would be difficult to speak of trust between countries of the region and Israel, to resolve the question of Israel's admission to the Middle East and South Asia Group, or to apply safeguards in the Middle East.

13. Mr. MANNO (Italy), having endorsed the statement made by Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union, congratulated the Agency on its fortieth anniversary and expressed gratitude for the excellent work it had done and the results it had achieved with regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the prevention of nuclear proliferation. He also congratulated Malta and Burkina Faso on having joined the Agency and addressed his warmest appreciation to the Director General, Mr. Hans Blix, who had for 16 years guided the Agency with exemplary skill.

14. Italy had been a member of the Agency ever since its establishment and had manifested its commitment to the organization by assuming responsibilities in high positions: as had, for example, the late lamented Maurizio Zifferero, formerly Deputy Director General of the Department of Research and Isotopes, who had headed the Action Team for the implementation of the Security Council resolutions on Iraq. Italy attached great importance to the Agency's activities and their future development and hoped to play a leading role in steering the Agency's programmes during its coming term on the Board of Governors.

15. Looking at the horizons opening up for the Agency on the eve of the next millennium, Italy believed that a number of issues merited special attention:

- Strengthening safeguards while remaining at zero real growth through better use of new inspection technologies and through the vesting by Member States of new powers in the Agency;

- Pursuit of maximum synergy with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization;

- Careful management of the Agency's structures and rationalization of its operations in order to make them as efficient as possible;

- Safe management of irradiated nuclear fuel, especially in the light of the feasible strategic options;

- Safe management of radioactive waste and spent fuel, in particular by promoting the publication of general technical guides, fostering international co-operation and encouraging the development of technologies for final disposal of long-term radioactive waste;

- Development of safety standards for the decommissioning of nuclear facilities;

- Maximum use of spin-offs from nuclear technology in the areas of environmental conservation, agriculture and human health. In that regard, the Agency's efforts in the field of technical co-operation should help to steer the needs of emerging and developing countries. That steering function was of fundamental importance. If that approach was incorporated in appropriate budget decisions, Italy would be ready to support it with adequate contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund representing a high percentage of its share of the target.

16. Italy agreed that it was necessary for increasing efforts to be made to spread a common nuclear safety culture worldwide based on principles and rules accepted by all countries that used nuclear energy in research and power generation.

17. The safety of dangerous or obsolete nuclear power plants operating in Central and Eastern Europe and the newly independent States was a problem to which Italy devoted a great deal of attention, and it was working to improve the safety culture in that region. On the multilateral level, it contributed to the specific efforts of institutions such as the European Commission and the Nuclear Safety Account managed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. It also intended to operate on the bilateral level through technical assistance projects.

18. Another matter that Italy regarded with deep interest was the Chernobyl Shelter Implementation Plan, which had a prominent place in the Memorandum of Understanding between the G-7 and Ukraine on the closure of the Chernobyl complex by the year 2000. Italy supported the decision taken by the G-7 at the Denver Summit in 1997 to contribute US $300 million to the budget for the Chernobyl Shelter Implementation Plan, which was expected to amount to around $760 million. The decision by the G-7 to shoulder a substantial part of the cost was a significant step towards the launching of the project, but the sum would not suffice to implement it in its entirety. His delegation hoped that all Member States of the Agency understood the need to widen the base of financial participation in the project and requested them to make pledges without delay.

19. With regard to Article VI of the Statute, Italy supported a change that would both increase the number of seats in the Board of Governors and make all Member States eligible for them. It had taken note of the report by the Board of Governors to the General Conference on Article VI and of the report by the Chairman of the Board of Governors on the composition of regional groups, which indicated that the Board was unable to make any recommendation. Italy believed that the expansion of the Board, the composition of regional groups and the criteria for eligibility were interrelated and required a "package" approach. Since the issue could not be easily resolved, it might be useful to set up an ad hoc committee in the near future with a clear mandate to examine the possible alternative solutions.

20. Italy attached considerable importance to the Board's decision on 15 May 1997 to adopt the Model Additional Protocol to comprehensive safeguards agreements, which would strengthen the Agency's ability to detect undeclared nuclear activities. From the very beginning, Italy had acknowledged the importance of the work carried out under Programme 93+2 with the aim of giving the Agency more effective instruments for preventing nuclear proliferation. During Italy's presidency of the European Union, his country had done its utmost to reach an acceptable political compromise on the most controversial matters, such as universality and guarantees of national sovereignty. Together with the other countries in the European Union, Italy had undertaken an analysis of the new obligations contained in the Model Additional Protocol in order to make sure that they were compatible with obligations under the EURATOM Treaty.

21. Italy had undertaken, at both the bilateral and multilateral levels (through the European Union's recent participation in KEDO), to contribute in a practical way, including financially, to the stabilization process on the Korean Peninsula. It was convinced that those steps would enable it to make an important contribution to peace in Asia. Nonetheless, Italy expected the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with the obligations it had assumed under its safeguards agreement with the Agency and to allow the Agency to carry out its tasks fully.

22. Emphasizing the fact that the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management adopted in September 1997 was the first international instrument to deal with radioactive waste disposal, he said that Italy was convinced that promoting a nuclear safety culture, which was the main aim of the Convention, would help to solve the energy problems of the developing countries.

23. Turning to the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage, he said Italy considered that those two instruments would also improve the nuclear safety regime. As a country that posed no risk of nuclear accident, Italy had always advocated an international system designed to protect the potential victims of such an accident.

24. In conclusion, he wished to convey warm greetings to the future Director General of the Agency, Mr. ElBaradei, who, he was sure, would ensure that the Agency remained one of the best-run international organizations. In carrying out his demanding duties, he would be able to count on Italy's full support.

Mr. Al-Ghais (Kuwait) took the Chair.

25. Mr. VOSKANIAN (Armenia) said that his delegation fully associated itself with the statement made on behalf of the Eastern European Group commending Mr. Blix on his outstanding work during his 16 years' leadership of the Agency. It also associated itself with the congratulations addressed to Mr. ElBaradei on his appointment as Director General, and welcomed Burkina Faso and Malta on their admission to the Agency.

26. He once again expressed his Government's gratitude for the Agency's considerable assistance before and after the reopening of the Medzamor nuclear power plant. The enormous work done by experts of various countries who had visited the power plant was much appreciated.

27. The Armenian delegation commended the Secretariat on the efforts which had led to the adoption in May of the Model Additional Protocol. Armenia had always supported measures aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the safeguards system, and had been the first country with a nuclear power plant to sign an additional protocol on 29 September, which, pending its ratification by Parliament, would be applied provisionally in accordance with its Article 17.

28. Armenia welcomed the adoption of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management and hoped that it would enter into force in the near future. It also welcomed the establishment of a comprehensive international nuclear liability regime through the adoption of the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage. However, the present formula for the calculation of contributions placed a heavy burden on the economy of a number of countries, particularly those of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It was regrettable that the proposals put forward several times to set a special ceiling for the contributions of States with a relatively high installed nuclear capacity but a low per capita GDP had not been accepted.

29. The Government of Armenia did its best to fulfil its financial obligations and, in spite of its budgetary constraints, had managed to find the resources to pay the amount necessary for the restoration of its voting rights.

30. On 24 September, the Armenian Parliament had ratified the Convention on Nuclear Safety with an overwhelming majority of votes. Armenia had thus reaffirmed its commitment to continue to improve nuclear safety at its nuclear facilities and to hold discussions with neighbouring countries on the necessary exchange of information.

31. The Armenian Government was also determined to ensure that the Medzamor nuclear power plant had the highest levels of safety. It was currently implementing the safety measures on the list that had been drawn up before the reopening of the plant. The Nuclear Safety Advisory Council, which was directly responsible to the President's Office, met regularly to monitor the implementation of those measures.

32. Various safety measures which received multilateral support (particularly from the Agency and TACIS) as well as bilateral support were being implemented. One of the most recent was the arrangement between the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Nuclear Regulatory Authority of Armenia for the exchange of technical information and co-operation in the area of nuclear safety, which had been signed by the two countries on 30 September.

33. A number of Agency technical co-operation projects were being carried out in Armenia to improve different aspects of nuclear safety. Those projects covered specifically environmental radiation, occupational radiation protection, assessment of the operational safety of the Armenian nuclear power plant and monitoring around it, the radioactive waste management system, the radiation protection infrastructure and the seismic safety re-evaluation of the power plant.

34. The Government of Armenia was extremely interested in improving the training of the nuclear specialists who operated the power plant, as well as the personnel of the national regulatory bodies, and appreciated the Agency's special efforts to that end. A protocol for a joint project (covering training, seismic studies and emergency planning) was about to be signed by the heads of the regulatory bodies of Armenia and Turkey.

35. Armenia highly appreciated the assistance given by the Agency in strengthening its national legislation. A law on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which was expected to be adopted by the National Assembly by the end of the year, was at present being discussed by the Government.

36. The Armenian Government was working in close co-operation with the Agency's Department of Technical Co-operation on the implementation of approved projects. His delegation was holding consultations with the representatives of other countries and with various Divisions of the Agency and trusted that those consultations would bring positive results.

37. Mr. BULBULA (Ethiopia) paid tribute to Mr. Blix, whose skilful leadership had enabled the Agency to achieve the objectives set out in its Statute. He also congratulated Mr. ElBaradei on his election to the post of Director General and assured him of Ethiopia's full support.

38. In the 40 years of its existence, the Agency had achieved one of its main objectives: the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Among the achievements of global significance was the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa and the adoption of three legal instruments in 1997.

39. The United Nations Special Initiative on Africa should enhance the continent's development and prevent it from being marginalized in the twenty-first century. Despite its resource limitations, the Agency should play a greater role in the continent's development efforts.

40. The Ethiopian Government, through the Ethiopian Science and Technology Commission, was embarking on co-operation programmes with the Agency which were fully consistent with the new directions. Although Ethiopia was categorized as a least developed country, it now placed less emphasis on infrastructural capacity building and more on programmes and projects of socio-economic relevance. In doing so, it was designing fewer programmes, but they were ones that had greater impact and were better directed towards end-users.

41. Stressing the importance of the transfer of management skills, he noted that the Agency's most useful activities included its efforts in controlling and eradicating livestock diseases, such as trypanosomiasis, through the sterile-insect technique, isotope hydrology for groundwater development and geothermal resources development and management. Ethiopia also received Agency assistance in the area of nutritional improvement and was now able to assess micronutrient deficiencies using isotope techniques. It therefore supported the strengthening of the Agency's programme in that area for the period 1999 to 2000. Ethiopia was an ardent supporter of the regional programmes for Africa, particularly AFRA, and participated in various Model Projects. Indeed, the most meaningful relationship between Member States and the Agency was in the area of technical co-operation.

42. Co-operation between the Agency and Ethiopia had strengthened markedly in recent years and, thanks to the Country Programme Framework approach, took greater account of national development plans. The Agency's technical co-operation activities over the past 40 years, particularly in the fields of health, diagnostic techniques, infrastructure development, animal health and nutrition, and water resources had been commendable. Ethiopia was doing everything possible to meet the Agency's standards in the area of radiation safety and to that end had drawn up a radiation protection policy and set up an authority responsible for its implementation.

43. To commemorate the Agency's fortieth anniversary, the Ethiopian Science and Technology Commission, which was the focal point for Agency-supported programmes, would be issuing a special bulletin in April 1998 highlighting the achievements in the area of co-operation and, during the same month, Ethiopia would be hosting the ninth technical working group meeting of AFRA.

44. Mr. YENNIMATAS (Greece), having endorsed the statement made by Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries, congratulated the Director General who, after 16 years of successful leadership, would soon be leaving the Agency. While emphasizing the Agency's important role as the main international organization responsible for promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, he also welcomed the new Director General of the Agency, Mr. ElBaradei, whose talents and long experience of the Agency's affairs would enable him to lead the Agency successfully up to the year 2000 and beyond. Mr. ElBaradei could count on Greece's full support.

45. Looking back on the past year and particularly the past few months, he noted a number of important results, including the conclusion of the Model Additional Protocol to strengthen the safeguards system, the implementation of new procedures for the preparation and review of safety standards, the Model Project concept for technical co-operation projects, the negotiation of new legal instruments relating to nuclear safety and the conclusion of a new convention on the safety of spent fuel and radioactive waste management, as well as the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage.

46. In May, after long negotiations, the Board had approved the Model Additional Protocol, which would facilitate the adoption of new measures to strengthen the effectiveness and increase the efficiency of safeguards. Greece had contributed to the drafting of the Model Protocol because it considered that universal agreement on the importance of non-proliferation and an effective and credible safeguards system were increasingly necessary in the new political environment of the post-Cold War era. It wished to support all efforts aimed at combating vigorously the risks of proliferation. There was no doubt that nuclear proliferation, apart from being a clear danger to the security of the planet, could jeopardize the ability of States to benefit from the peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

47. The Greek Government supported all efforts being made to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear materials. It also supported the establishment of the International Physical Protection Advisory Service, which would advise Member States on improving their national nuclear security systems. He hoped that the service would be extended to enable Member States to be equipped with the proper means for controlling nuclear material and radiation sources.

48. The Agency played a primary role in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The two treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa and South East Asia, which had been signed in 1996, entrusted the Agency with the task of verifying compliance by the signatories.

49. Agency verification of nuclear material removed from weapon programmes was a further disarmament measure. However there was a need to make further progress in that field. Additional regional arrangements for non-proliferation were necessary to bring stability at regional level. The conclusion of a treaty to end the production of fissile material for weapons purposes was one of the most important disarmament objectives. The Agency's role should be further expanded to ensure that verification measures were also developed and applied in nuclear-weapon States.

50. The Greek Government believed that intensive negotiations should be held between the Agency's Secretariat and the Provisional Secretariat of the CTBTO in order to enable the two organizations to co-operate fully in their fields of competence. Such co-operation would be beneficial to the CTBTO and also to non-proliferation in general.

51. Greece had already ratified the Convention on Nuclear Safety, which had entered into force for his country a few days previously. It would accordingly be able to participate in future peer review meetings. Appropriate laws had also been passed in 1996 and 1997 to harmonize national legislation with that of the European Union. Funds had been allocated to the Greek Atomic Energy Commission to install a nationwide automatic system for measuring environmental radioactivity.

52. Greece had actively participated in the negotiations for the conclusion of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. However, it regretted that agreement had not been reached on enlarging the Convention's scope to include reprocessing facilities.

53. Greece believed that the Agency's technical co-operation programme was important for the developing countries. It had therefore made its technical facilities available to the Agency for the training of scientists and organization of technical seminars. While appreciating the initiatives taken by the Secretariat, it felt that a further effort was needed to improve the global effectiveness of technical co-operation activities.

54. Efficient control of exports of nuclear and non-nuclear material and nuclear-related dual-use items was an additional means of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and of further strengthening the Agency's safeguards system. Greece, which participated fully in the control mechanism established for that purpose, required comprehensive safeguards as a condition of nuclear supply. In doing so, it believed that such a control mechanism was not discriminatory and had not been established in order to dictate trade rules, but mainly to prevent proliferation and provide guarantees that exports were intended for purely peaceful purposes. It urged those States which exported nuclear and other materials or were involved in the transit of such materials to adopt those arrangements in order to assist the international efforts to combat non-proliferation and strengthen the Agency's safeguards.

55. As in previous years, his delegation wished to comment on the recruitment of Professional staff members. He noted with regret that the number of Professional staff from the countries of Western Europe, and in particular from Greece, had been continually falling over the past years. The resolutions adopted almost every year by the General Conference concerning personnel matters had had no effect as far as Greece was concerned. While recognizing the difficulties facing the Director General in the matter of recruitment, he invited him to pay more attention to the qualifications of the personnel to be recruited and to the justified complaints of some Member States.

56. In conclusion, Greece approved the Agency's Annual Report for 1996 and the Budget for 1998. He hoped that the new Director General would make every effort to enable the Agency to carry out its functions as efficiently and effectively as possible, taking into account

the financial difficulties of the majority of Member States. Greece would continue to promote compliance with the principles of non-proliferation and the strengthening of the Agency's tasks in the areas of safeguards, disarmament and safety, taking due account of the needs of developing countries.

57. Mr. BOERSNER STEDER (Venezuela), having welcomed the new Member States of the Agency, Malta and Burkina Faso, said that the forty-first session of the General Conference had particular importance for all the participants for two reasons. Firstly, it marked the fortieth anniversary of the creation of the Agency, an organization which had carried out effective work to promote peace, nuclear safety, peaceful uses of atomic energy and the spread of nuclear techniques which contributed to progress in developing countries. As the outgoing Director General had said in his memorable speech at the opening of the session, that work had not been completed and the Agency would continue to play a useful role in the future as a force for security and co-operation in the field of nuclear energy. The Venezuelan Government had sent a message to that effect to the President of the General Conference.

58. Secondly, the current session of the General Conference coincided with the imminent end of the current Director General's term of office and the final appointment of his successor. For 16 years, Mr. Hans Blix had carried out his tasks admirably. Venezuela, like other countries in Latin America and the developing world, had always greatly appreciated and unreservedly supported his actions, which were both energetic and characterized by a sense of human solidarity. He was pleased that the General Conference had decided to confer the title of Director General Emeritus upon him and sincerely wished him every happiness and success in the years to come. For the first time, the developing world was going to take on responsibility for directing the Agency through his successor, Mr. ElBaradei, whose experience and exceptional qualities were greatly appreciated. On behalf of Venezuela, he offered him his warmest congratulations and best wishes for success, and expressed his willingness to co-operate with him.

59. As in previous years, Mr. Blix had skilfully summarized in his introductory statement the results achieved by the Agency over the past year. Venezuela supported the ideas he had presented and welcomed his report.

60. Venezuela attached particular importance to the Agency's technical co-operation activities and had accordingly followed closely the process of restructuring in the Department of Technical Co-operation. It hoped that the new system in place since 1 September would contribute to greater efficiency in the implementation of programmes. In that connection, he wished to mention the useful projects which were being implemented in Venezuela under the auspices of the Agency and with its co-operation. As the Director General had indicated, the Model Project VEN/8/010 entitled "Groundwater Resources in the Caracas Valley" was continuing to be implemented successfully and was helping to achieve a long-term solution to the chronic water supply problem in the capital, which had expanded dramatically over recent decades. There was no doubt that that project could serve as a model for other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as other developing regions.

61. Venezuela was participating in 10 regional ARCAL projects and 11 national projects relating to nuclear medicine, radiopharmaceutical production, veterinary science, agricultural development, the industrial applications of nuclear techniques, environmental protection and training in nuclear analytical techniques. Of all the ARCAL projects, the one entitled "Tracer Techniques in Dam Leakage" deserved special mention. It had entered the operational phase, and the responsibility for its implementation fell mainly upon Venezuelan technicians, who greatly appreciated the invaluable contributions made by the Agency's experts.

62. It should be noted that certain projects which had encountered initial difficulties in implementation had been modified jointly by Agency experts and Venezuelan technicians and were now producing very promising results, such as project VEN/5/018 entitled "Genetic Improvement of Fruits and Pepper". In addition, the Nuclear Affairs Directorate of the Ministry of Energy and Mines was modernizing its project management and training system in order to make optimum use of the resources supplied by the IAEA.

63. Venezuela was also paying great attention to the issue of nuclear safety and therefore welcomed the drawing up of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management as well as the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage. It also welcomed the Nuclear Safety Review 1997 (GC(41)/INF/5 and Add.1).

64. Radioactive waste processing had become a priority for Venezuela, which had undertaken to build a large storage facility for radioactive sources withdrawn from use, which would comply with international safety standards and the most recent Agency recommendations. All users of substances and equipment that generated ionizing radiation were obliged to observe the national radiological safety standards which had been published and to have trained staff, radiation detectors and suitable emergency procedures.

65. With regard to the delicate and complex question of the amendment of Article VI of the Statute, he reaffirmed his delegation's support for an expansion of the Board of Governors to ensure more democratic representation of all regions and, in particular, equitable representation of developing countries. Among the proposals drawn up during the past year, it welcomed the one which had been presented by Sudan. It hoped that it would be possible, during the current session, to achieve an equitable solution which would be satisfactory for all the Member States so that an end could finally be put to a discussion which had continued for too long.

66. With regard to Agency personnel matters, Venezuela welcomed the gradual improvement in the representation of developing countries and of women.

67. His delegation was keen to reaffirm its unreserved support for all the Agency's work. To turn that support into positive action, Venezuela had made considerable efforts and had made the sacrifices needed internally to settle its arrears to both the Agency and the other bodies of the United Nations at the same time. Nevertheless, given that the global economic changes of recent years had tended to reduce many developing countries' ability to pay (even if only temporarily), the Agency should be lenient towards certain developing countries,

particularly the poorest, which were behind with their contributions despite their evident goodwill. In particular, the arrears of those Member States should under no circumstances be punished by a reduction in or suspension of the technical assistance provided.

Mr. Niewodniczański (Poland) resumed the Chair.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (resumed)
(GC(41)/6)

68. The PRESIDENT invited the General Conference to proceed with a vote by secret ballot to fill the second seat for Africa.

69. A secret ballot was held to fill the second seat for Africa.

70. The PRESIDENT, noting that the counting of votes would take some time, suggested that the General Conference resume the general debate until the results could be announced.

GENERAL DEBATE AND STATEMENTS MARKING THE AGENCY'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY (resumed)
(GC(41)/8)

71. Ms. TOLLE (Kenya), having congratulated Malta and Burkina Faso on their admission to the Agency, noted that the current session marked a milestone in the Agency's history. It was celebrating its fortieth anniversary and, at the same time, Mr. ElBaradei was called upon to succeed Mr. Blix, who had shown exemplary dedication in his service to the Agency for 16 years, and whose initiatives in technical co-operation, especially in Kenya, and efforts to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, to implement the safeguards system and to minimize the risks which nuclear energy posed to life, health and the environment, would always be remembered.

72. After the discovery of radioactivity nearly a century ago, the discovery of nuclear fission had opened up new prospects for both peaceful and destructive uses of nuclear energy. The use of ionizing radiation and radioactive substances had spread widely into various sectors of economic life. However, the continued existence of nuclear weapons posed a very grave threat to international peace and security, which was exacerbated by the existence of large stocks of fissile material that were always vulnerable to theft and by the possibility of accidents at nuclear power plants. Bearing in mind the transboundary impact that nuclear accidents could have, they could not be considered as a purely national problem.

73. With regard to illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and other radioactive sources, Kenya greatly appreciated the way in which the Agency had tackled the problem with the support of its Member States and reiterated its support for the programme launched in 1997 to create a database, to improve the physical protection and monitoring of nuclear material in Member States, to implement border control measures and to facilitate the adoption by Member States of basic safety standards pertaining to illicit trafficking in nuclear materials.

74. Her Government considered that, in order to guarantee nuclear safety in the world of the future, only the clear, fair and transparent application of safeguards would make it possible to detect violations and to take strict measures in cases of failure to adhere to commitments. Furthermore, it was convinced that all internationally adopted safeguards measures should be implemented in strict compliance with the legal framework set up by the Agency's Statute and other relevant instruments. It was of the utmost importance that all States should make all their nuclear activities transparent by declaring their nuclear material inventories and by allowing the correctness and completeness of their declarations to be verified. In that regard, she congratulated the Agency on the progress achieved in enforcing measures to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of safeguards within the context of Programme 93+2, which would facilitate the accounting for and control of nuclear material, facilities that had been decommissioned and shut down, and fuel cycles.

75. In order to give collective initiatives on non-proliferation and the total elimination of nuclear weapons a chance of success, it was vital to put a stop to the fabrication and use of fissile material for nuclear weapons production. In that regard, she called for the start of negotiations on a convention to prohibit the production of fissile material intended for the manufacture of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

76. As a peace-loving country, Kenya supported all international initiatives promoting nuclear disarmament. While there was reason to welcome the progress achieved in that respect, and particularly the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, the indefinite extension of the NPT and the strengthening of the Agency's safeguards system, it was necessary to recognize that those developments in themselves were not sufficient to achieve a total elimination of nuclear weapons. It was therefore imperative that negotiations on the elimination of nuclear weapons be pursued as a matter of highest priority. In that context, her Government had welcomed the adoption of the CTBT by the United Nations General Assembly in September 1996 and the subsequent establishment of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission. It was happy to note that the Commission's Provisional Technical Secretariat, set up in spring 1997, had made every effort to achieve progress in its future co-operation with the Agency. Those were important signs of the international community's commitment to the objectives of nuclear non-proliferation. Kenya would contribute to those efforts by continuing its active participation in the seismic and radionuclide monitoring system established within the framework of the CTBT. It reiterated its full support for the implementation scheme for the Agency's safeguards system, which provided for increased access to information relating to nuclear technology and activities in States, while also taking account of the principle of national sovereignty.

77. The Agency's performance over the past year was as commendable as in previous years and had enabled Member States to derive maximum benefits from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which the technical co-operation programme was helping to promote. Since the adoption of the Model Project concept, technical co-operation was increasingly being focused on end-users, which was enhancing the socio-economic impact of nuclear energy applications. The success of that new concept had given a fresh impetus to the Agency's technical co-operation activities and had resulted in new initiatives: new Model Projects,

Country Programme Frameworks, thematic planning, technical co-operation among developing countries, co-funding and the use of targets and success criteria.

78. The Kenyan delegation was convinced that that approach was likely to produce tangible socio-economic results. Since the technical co-operation programme was increasingly focused on national needs and sustainable development priorities, it would be even more efficient and cost effective. Kenya urged all its partners to give maximum support to that approach in order to achieve one of the Agency's main objectives: to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of nuclear energy to development.

79. The United Nations had repeatedly endorsed the principle of technical co-operation among developing countries, which took account of the fact that those countries had differing levels of technological development and which could bring benefits for all the partners if it were applied comprehensively. Kenya, which considered that that approach was particularly well suited to the prevailing climate of budgetary austerity, supported the activities of AFRA at regional and subregional levels. The AFRA programme had enabled strong ties of friendship and co-operation to be established among countries in the region which had similar problems and interests. Through the assistance provided by the Agency within that framework, a number of countries had been able to become partners in development, which had greatly contributed to integration and harmony in that region of the world. Kenya hoped that support for the AFRA programme would be maintained, since previous initiatives had allowed nuclear energy issues in the region to be tackled while taking into account the specific characteristics of individual countries. The AFRA programme promised to be a vital driving force for the future implementation of the Agency's technical co-operation programme.

80. The technical co-operation activities carried out in Kenya had centred mainly on training, technology, agriculture, human and animal health and nuclear safety. For its part, Kenya had made a modest contribution by providing experts and lecturers, training facilities and financial resources. Those activities had greatly contributed to strengthening nuclear technology in Kenya. A unified set of safety standards agreed upon by consensus and provisions for radiation safety in Member States was essential. The promotion of radiation safety had played a very important role in the implementation of nuclear technology in Kenya, ensuring that health and safety conditions for handling, storing and using radiation sources were satisfactory.

81. During the past year, the project on using non-destructive testing techniques for quality control in industry and establishing acceptable standards for Kenya's industrial products had been extended to cover non-destructive testing of concrete structures and certification of the staff carrying out such tests. To achieve that aim, the Kenya Bureau of Standards had drawn up a harmonized national qualification and certification system in collaboration with the ISO and other bodies. Kenya thanked the United States warmly for its help in implementing that important project through the Agency.

82. With regard to research and development, the Institute of Nuclear Science at the University of Nairobi had given help to other institutions by organizing training in the maintenance of scientific instruments and by carrying out analytical work in various fields of

research and development. Through such co-operation, the Institute had become an important centre for training and for disseminating knowledge on nuclear science, analytical techniques and instrumentation in the region. Her delegation was convinced that similar continued co-operation would enhance the Institute's ability to offer advanced training in all the fields of nuclear science and technology which were national priorities.

83. In the area of agriculture, the assistance provided by the Agency within the framework of AFRA had led to the development of new varieties of wheat with improved resistance to drought through induced mutation breeding techniques. Other projects related to the diagnosis and control of animal diseases, the control of the tsetse fly and trypanosomiasis in the Lambwe valley, and nitrogen fixation by multi-purpose tree species. With regard to medicine, the Agency's technical co-operation projects had greatly helped to improve the national health care delivery system, especially in the field of diagnostic radiology and radiography. The country's main centres using those techniques were now in a position to pass on the scientific and technical expertise they had acquired to other centres, which should enable the level of care in the country to be significantly improved.

84. Kenya appreciated the efforts made by the Secretariat over the previous 15 years to increase the proportion of women working in Professional posts in the Secretariat, which had risen from 11.7% to 18.6%. However, that increase was still too small. She therefore urged the Agency to redouble its efforts to train and recruit competent and qualified women from all regions of the world.

85. With regard to the composition of the Board of Governors, she reiterated the need to increase the size of the Board in line with the draft resolution submitted by the African Group in document GC(41)/COM.5/14.

86. In conclusion, she said that as the new millennium approached, the international community should continue to help the Agency achieve its fundamental objectives, which were to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity and to ensure that the assistance provided either by the Agency itself or under its supervision and control was not used to serve any military purposes.

87. Mr. NIITENBERG (Estonia), having congratulated the Agency on its 40th anniversary and welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members, said that his country recognized the Agency's achievements and wished it success in meeting the challenges of the future.

88. It was essential to support fully Parts 1 and 2 of Programme 93+2 as well as all other measures aimed at strengthening the safeguards system, since the proliferation of nuclear technology and trafficking in nuclear materials gave rise to the concern that nuclear weapons could be used by terrorists or irresponsible régimes in some countries. That danger, and not a major nuclear war, was the main threat in the twenty-first century and it was incumbent upon the Agency to deal with that threat and eliminate it. His country's nuclear security policy was based on that understanding and it would be implementing that policy by acceding to international conventions and bilateral agreements and by strengthening the measures against

trafficking in nuclear materials through better surveillance of its borders and by strengthening its customs controls.

89. The Agency's 40-year history had been characterized by various landmarks: the nuclear arms race and the subsequent conclusion of treaties limiting stockpiles of nuclear weapons and delivery systems, the increase in the number of nuclear power plants and the Chernobyl accident. It should not be forgotten that the Agency had contributed to the development of nuclear science in the fields of medicine, agriculture and technology.

90. Although Estonia had only been independent for 7 of the 40 years since the Agency had been established, those 7 years had been marked by a number of different events including its accession to the NPT in 1992, the transfer of the former Soviet military nuclear facility in Paldiski to Estonia in 1995, and the recent adoption of an act establishing the legal framework for radiation practice in the country.

91. Estonia's future tasks would be dictated by the process of integrating the country into the European Union. The absence of a nuclear programme could no longer be used as a reason to justify shortcomings in nuclear legislation once Estonia had become a member of the Union. A safeguards agreement between Estonia and the Agency had been prepared for approval by the Government. The recently adopted radiation act was consistent with the Agency's Basic Safety Standards. However, the harmonization process should go further.

92. Technical co-operation with the Agency or with other countries through the Agency had been very beneficial for Estonia, which recognized the value of the advice given for the decommissioning of the Paldiski nuclear facility and for solving the problems of the handling and disposal of radioactive waste. The feasibility study for a final repository in Estonia, undertaken in co-operation with the Agency, was an important assistance project.

93. While Estonia had no nuclear programme, it was surrounded by countries with nuclear power plants. For that reason, it was interested in regional co-operation through the Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Paldiski International Expert Reference Group, and he thanked those groups for their co-operation and assistance. A project on radon charting in Estonia was running smoothly thanks to the fruitful co-operation of the Swedish Radiation Protection Institute. The recently concluded Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management was a solid basis for regional co-operation, particularly in the Baltic.

94. The challenges that Estonia would have to face in the future included the radioactive waste of military origin inherited from the Soviet Union and the lack of final disposal facilities for that waste; uranium mining tailings in the north-east of the country; and the radioactive remnants of two decommissioned submarines. It also had to harmonize its legislation with European Union and EURATOM directives and seek alternatives to its energy policy, without excluding the nuclear power option.

95. In conclusion, he thanked Mr. Blix, the outgoing Director General, and extended his congratulations and best wishes to Mr. ElBaradei, the new Director General. He also thanked the Agency's extremely competent staff.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS (resumed)
(GC(41)/6)

96. The PRESIDENT announced the result of the ballot to the General Conference.

97. In the election of the second member from the area of Africa the result was:

Abstentions:	1
Valid votes:	96
Required majority:	49
Votes obtained:	
Ghana	54
Sudan	25
Algeria	13
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	4

98. Having attained the required majority, Ghana was elected to the Board.

99. The PRESIDENT congratulated the 11 members which had just been elected to the Board of Governors. Under Article VI.D of the Statute, they would hold office from the end of the current session of the General Conference to the end of the regular session after next - in other words, to the end of the forty-third regular session in 1999.

GENERAL DEBATE AND STATEMENTS MARKING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AGENCY (resumed)
(GC(41)/8)

100. Mr. DAHMANI (Algeria), having welcomed the Conference's approval of Malta and Burkina Faso for Agency membership, paid tribute and expressed his country's gratitude to the Director General, Mr. Blix, for the manner in which he had led the Agency during his terms of office. He also wished every success to the future Director General, Mr. ElBaradei.

101. The Agency's fortieth anniversary conferred special meaning on the activities currently under way and highlighted the extent of the challenges still to be faced. For its part, Algeria would continue to abide completely by the principles enshrined in the Statute. During the past 40 years, the Agency had played an increasingly important role and demonstrated an ability to adapt, remaining sensitive to the needs of developing countries and in particular strengthening

its technical assistance and co-operation activities. In that connection, Algeria was very satisfied with the quality of the assistance provided by the Agency under its technical co-operation programme. His country remained firmly convinced that the Agency's promotional activities, like its other statutory activities, constituted an essential pillar supporting the Agency's efforts in the interests of non-proliferation and the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy.

102. The technical co-operation programme should be in keeping with the growing needs in the field of the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. It was therefore essential that the Model Projects advocated as part of the Agency's new technical assistance approach should respond fully to the priority needs of the developing countries. Algeria was in favour of the Agency's new strategy for designing, implementing and evaluating projects. In Algeria, numerous users of nuclear techniques in sectors as varied as agriculture, water resources management, industry, energy, health, biotechnology and the environment were participating in the formulation of proposals for national projects to be implemented during the next two-year technical co-operation cycle.

103. Like its promotional activities, the Agency's non-proliferation endeavours should be supported. Algeria's support for those endeavours reflected its wish to contribute to the international community's efforts to strengthen peace and security both regionally and globally. Thus, since participating actively in the NPT Review and Extension Conference, his country had taken important non-proliferation steps, first becoming a party to the NPT, then concluding a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency and finally embarking on subsidiary arrangement negotiations, which were due to be concluded very soon. Those steps demonstrated Algeria's wish to strengthen the climate of trust and transparency which now characterized its relations with the Agency.

104. Algeria, which welcomed the establishment of an African nuclear-weapon-free zone, would like to see that example of regional denuclearization followed in other regions - especially in the Middle East, where a single country was continuing to block the establishment of such a zone. His country continued to be very concerned about the attitude of Israel, which was still refusing to become a party to the NPT and to place all its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards.

105. The fact that a consensus solution to the question of enlarging the Board of Governors had still not been found was also a matter of concern to his country. Given its technological potential, Algeria was in favour of enlarging the Board on the basis of an agreement which took into account the aspirations of developing countries, particularly of those in Africa. It accordingly supported the African Group's proposal, which had been welcomed by the Group of 77.

106. With regard to nuclear, radiation and waste safety, Algeria, which had become a party to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, would continue to support the other legal instruments developed under the auspices of the Agency and measures being taken by the Agency in that field. It would like to see the Agency make a real contribution to the international

community's efforts to strengthen co-operation directed towards the improvement of safety standards and mechanisms at all stages in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

107. Once its recently created atomic energy authority was firmly in place, Algeria would - as a high priority - examine the question of how best to implement the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management and the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage. It intended to establish the regulatory and safety-related bodies needed in connection with Agency conventions and in particular with the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the ultimate aim being to have a complete set of national structures for ensuring the fulfilment by Algeria of its commitments in that area.

108. Mr. EL FADHEL KHALIL (Tunisia), having welcomed the admission to the Agency of Malta and Burkina Faso, congratulated the new Director General and paid tribute to his predecessor, said that the adoption of the Additional Protocol to strengthen and consolidate the safeguards system, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Protocol to Amend the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage had created a favourable climate for the safe development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

109. That new situation brought with it several obligations for the Agency and also for those Member States which possessed nuclear weapons. Firstly, it was necessary to assure equitable representation of regional groups within the Agency's various organs and, in particular, in the Board of Governors. In that connection, Tunisia supported the African proposal for an amendment of Article VI of the Agency's Statute. Secondly, technical co-operation would need to be intensified in order to strengthen activities in developing countries. Thirdly, safeguards agreements would have to be applied to all countries, especially those which refused to subject their nuclear facilities to conditions of total transparency while benefiting from the application of the same conditions to neighbouring countries. Fourthly, care would have to be taken to ensure that the strengthening of the safeguards system did not place an additional financial burden on countries whose nuclear activities posed no threats.

110. Tunisia had acceded to all conventions relating to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and enjoyed excellent relations with the Agency in the area of technical co-operation, which had led to the launching of several pilot projects. One such had been the establishment, with the help of France and of the Agency, of a semi-industrial pilot plant for food irradiation, a project which would be completed in the course of 1998.

111. On the regional level, Tunisia had in 1997 hosted a meeting of AFRA national co-ordinators, which had given it an opportunity to strengthen its co-operation with other African countries. In addition, Tunisia played host to the headquarters of the Arab Atomic Energy Agency, a technically-oriented body which worked towards the same objectives as the IAEA and with which he urged the Agency to strengthen its co-operative links.

112. Tunisia, which regularly paid its assessed contribution to the Regular Budget, had also paid the voluntary contribution which it had pledged the previous year and would pay the whole of its share of the target for the TCF for 1998.

113. In the coming decades, many of the developing countries, including Tunisia, would not be able to meet their growing energy needs without recourse to nuclear power. In that regard, low- and medium-power reactors seemed well-suited to the consumption patterns of small countries. Tunisia therefore supported the Agency's efforts in that field and hoped to see them pursued and consolidated. The use of such reactors for the production of potable water was of great interest to Tunisia, and accordingly it welcomed the establishment by the Agency of an expert group on water desalination, which included a Tunisian expert.

114. He commended the progress achieved by the international community in the field of nuclear non-proliferation, as witnessed by the strengthening of the safeguards system, the indefinite extension of the NPT and the establishment of the CTBTO, and in that context urged that all Member States should join the NPT.

115. A global and innovative approach was needed in tackling the question of eliminating all weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, from the Middle East. As an African country, Tunisia had been in favour of the denuclearization of that continent. However, several African countries were also in the Middle East, and therefore the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa would not really make sense until such weapons were eliminated from the Middle East as well.

116. Mr. YAMEOGO (Burkina Faso), having paid tribute to the outgoing Director General, Mr. Blix, and congratulated his successor, Mr. ElBaradei, on his election, thanked the Board of Governors and the General Conference for approving Burkina Faso's application for Agency membership. As a Member State, his country would abide by the Agency's Statute, fulfil its obligations and act in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Furthermore, it would endeavour to contribute to peace and sustainable development through close co-operation with the Agency and with other Member States.

117. Mr. ASHEEKE (Namibia), associating himself with the statement made by the Chairman of the African Group, paid tribute to the outgoing Director General, Mr. Blix, for the exemplary manner in which he had guided the work of the Agency over the previous 16 years. He also welcomed the appointment of Mr. ElBaradei as Director General, assuring him of his fullest co-operation, and the new members, Burkina Faso and Malta.

118. On the occasion of the Agency's fortieth anniversary, his country expressed its admiration for the professional work done by the Agency in the areas of non-proliferation and safety, and commended it on its commitment to the utilization of atomic energy for peaceful purposes and sustainable development. In that connection, he was pleased to inform the General Conference that his country had commemorated the Agency's fortieth anniversary by opening the first radiotherapy unit in Namibia, which had been established with considerable assistance from the Agency and the Government of the United States of America.

119. The Agency was playing an important role in the socio-economic development of Namibia, which continued to receive technical assistance from the Agency in the areas of agriculture, water resource management, public health, uranium mining and radiation safety, in particular by providing expert services and equipment and above all by contributing to human resources development, an area that was especially important to Namibia in view of the fact that, prior to independence, the majority of its people had had no opportunities to gain scientific and technical expertise.

120. The Agency's contribution in those technical fields was regarded by his Government as an excellent means of opening up the field of science and technology to young and disadvantaged Namibians. He therefore looked forward to a continued association with the Agency's technical co-operation programme and trusted that the reorganization of the technical co-operation services would enhance their effectiveness and efficiency for the benefit of all. It was, however, a matter of concern that funding for that very successful activity of the Agency had been dwindling, with negative effects on the programmes and projects. He therefore urged Member States to ensure that technical co-operation was funded on a secure and predictable basis.

121. Recalling that his country had committed itself fully to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and to the total elimination of all nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, particularly by signing the Pelindaba Treaty in April 1996, he took pleasure in informing the General Conference that the Namibian Government had approved the safeguards agreement with the Agency, which was currently awaiting ratification by Parliament.

122. With regard to the expansion of the Board of Governors, Namibia was very concerned about Africa's continued under-representation on the Board. That genuine concern should be addressed on its own merit, without being linked to extraneous issues. His delegation appealed to all Member States to correct the situation and to ensure that Africa was fairly represented.

123. Mr. SERVIÁN (Uruguay) said that the celebration of an anniversary was a good opportunity to evaluate what had been achieved and to look to the future. When, 40 years previously, the Agency had been established, the international community had had two major concerns in the nuclear area. One had been was the need to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The other had been to ensure that nuclear technologies and materials were not transferred from peaceful to military uses. The threat of the proliferation of nuclear weapons had terrorized the entire world. That had given rise to the three main Departments of the Agency: the Department of Research and Isotopes, in which he himself had had the honour of working, the Department of Technical Co-operation and the Department of Safeguards.

124. The Agency had performed its promotional and control responsibilities with exemplary effectiveness while maintaining a remarkable balance, despite strong pressure being exerted in one direction or another. In the past years, the Agency had made a decisive contribution to the creation of a nuclear capacity in the developing countries, while curbing the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Thousands of technologists and scientists had been trained,

hundreds of laboratories had been equipped and thousands of projects had been implemented with its assistance. He himself had been the first Uruguayan IAEA fellowship holder.

125. However, times had changed and new lines of action seemed to be required: the quest for greater efficiency, measured in terms of impact in the sectors producing goods and services, and the effort to achieve quality, measured, in particular, in terms of cost/benefit ratios and appropriateness to the real needs of the population of developing countries. The main concern of the Agency and of national nuclear bodies involved radiation protection and nuclear safety bore witness to that change of emphasis. In future, the Agency, national nuclear bodies and nuclear scientists should all endeavour to use the capabilities that had been established in order to resolve real national problems. An appropriate strategy to achieve that end would be to step up efforts to transfer nuclear technologies to national bodies, both public and private, that were capable of using them.

126. He was pleased to note the Agency's great contribution to the establishment of a safety culture through the training of personnel in radiation protection and nuclear safety, the establishment of an international nuclear legal regime and the setting up of dosimetry, calibration and radioactive waste management laboratories in the developing countries.

127. In conclusion, he thanked the Agency's Secretariat for the work it had carried out under the guidance of Mr. Blix and congratulated Mr. ElBaradei.

128. Mr. SIRBUBALO (Bosnia and Herzegovina) said that his country had already benefited from five technical co-operation projects, including two interregional projects, and that, in spite of the fact that it had joined the Agency only two years previously, co-operation between his Government and the Agency had been very good. His country had participated, to the extent that it was able, in the Agency's permanent activities, particularly in the development of a global safety culture.

129. He expressed his gratitude to the Agency for having shown exceptional understanding of the problems of his country. Human resources development was one of his Government's main goals. Owing to the war, his country's experts had not been able to study the latest scientific publications and had been unable to keep up to date with new achievements and new technologies. The process of continuous education supported by the Agency had enabled Bosnian experts to acquire qualifications which would make them self-sufficient in the management of various production processes in the future.

130. Agency experts had supported the efforts made by his country to develop new legislation in the field of radiation safety in accordance with the Basic Safety Standards. The Agency had also supported his country's work on reviewing and updating the registry of radiation sources, as well as its work on dosimetric monitoring of occupational exposure. One problem, however, remained unsolved, namely the country's inability to control movements of radioactive materials across its frontiers. Such support and co-operation was of great importance and could make a very valuable contribution to the Agency's efforts in other countries with similar problems.

131. He emphasized his country's dedication to the Agency and its goals and expressed his gratitude to it for its efforts to assist his country and involve it in Agency activities. The Agency and the Secretariat deserved particular commendation for what they had done over the past 40 years to strengthen the Agency as an instrument of international safety.

132. In conclusion, he conveyed his respect and gratitude to Mr. Blix for the remarkable way he had guided the Agency and wished him all the best for the future. The future Director General, Mr. ElBaradei, could be assured of his country's full support and co-operation.

133. Mr. MICHAELIDES (Cyprus), having welcomed Malta and Burkina Faso as new members of the Agency, said that the current session of the General Conference was marked by two events of particular importance: first, the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Agency's establishment and secondly the changeover in its leadership.

134. Over the 40 years of its existence, the Agency had spared no effort to promote and to guarantee the safe use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The results it had achieved were truly remarkable. Congratulating the Agency on the occasion of its fortieth anniversary, he expressed the conviction that it would continue in the future to fulfil its important role with equal success, for the benefit of mankind. He also thanked Mr. Blix for the outstanding dedication and competence with which he had directed the Agency over the past 16 years, and wished him every success for the future. In addition, he extended his congratulations and best wishes to the incoming Director General, Mr. ElBaradei, and assured him of his delegation's full support and co-operation. He also congratulated Mr. Peter Walker on the outstanding way in which he had directed the work of the Board of Governors.

135. Associating himself with the statement made by Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union, he said that Cyprus, which regarded the NPT as the most important international legal instrument for ensuring global security, the prevention of nuclear proliferation and nuclear disarmament, had supported the decision to extend the Treaty for an indefinite period, and urged all States to accede to it so that it could become truly universal.

136. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was another decisive step on the road towards non-proliferation. Cyprus, which was proud to be among those States which had signed the Treaty, had already taken steps towards its ratification and strongly urged all States to join it in signing that extremely important international legal instrument.

137. Cyprus welcomed the establishment of the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission in Vienna. It was now important to intensify efforts through bilateral and multilateral negotiations with a view to reaching a speedy agreement on a treaty to halt the production of fissile materials for military purposes.

138. Cyprus endorsed the Agency's activities relating to the application of safeguards to nuclear materials and supported efforts to strengthen further and improve the safeguards system, which was an integral part of the global non-proliferation regime. In that connection, he recalled that a safeguards agreement pursuant to the NPT had been concluded between Cyprus and the IAEA in 1972 and ratified a year later. Cyprus therefore welcomed the

adoption in May of that year of the Model Additional Protocol, which was designed to strengthen the efficiency of the safeguards system.

139. The Agency's technical co-operation programme was of great importance for Cyprus and Cyprus therefore supported the efforts being made to improve its quality. Cyprus had participated, and was still participating, in a number of national and regional Agency technical co-operation projects, and also provided the Agency with the services of its experts. Thus, very close co-operation had been established with the various Departments of the Agency, especially in the areas of radiation protection and the medical applications of nuclear energy. Since the Chernobyl accident, that collaboration had been further strengthened, enabling Cyprus to develop the infrastructure and expertise needed to deal with such an event in the future.

140. International co-operation was needed if the problem of illicit trafficking in nuclear materials was to be overcome. To that end, Cyprus had recently started participating in the Agency's database on illicit trafficking, was taking steps to sign and ratify the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, and was also considering accession to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Furthermore, it was in the process of setting up a multidisciplinary team to combat illicit trafficking and hoped that by the end of 1997 it would be in a position to collaborate fully in international efforts to combat the problem.

141. Mr. NYANDA (United Republic of Tanzania), after congratulating Malta and Burkina Faso on their admission to the Agency, said that in the course of the 40 years of its existence the Agency had accomplished its missions with remarkable success, largely due to the skills of the outgoing Director General, Mr. Blix, under whom a dedicated Secretariat had discharged its duties with great ability. He congratulated Mr. Blix on his distinguished service to the Agency and wished him happiness, health and prosperity in the future.

142. His delegation also congratulated Mr. ElBaradei on his well deserved appointment to the difficult post of Director General. He would be taking over the leadership of an organization which enjoyed an excellent reputation and whose Member States were united in their determination to ensure development through the peaceful use of nuclear energy, while ensuring safety and security through the application of the requisite safeguards. Judging by Mr. ElBaradei's curriculum vitae, there could be no doubt that he would succeed in ensuring that the Agency concentrated with even greater determination on its principal areas of activity, while responding flexibly to the new challenges it would have to face. His delegation therefore wished him every success in his extremely demanding task and also commended the Board of Governors on the transparency, impartiality and strictness with which it had conducted the selection and appointment process.

143. His country was extremely satisfied with the significant results achieved in the course of the Agency's 40 years of existence, as well as with the fruitful co-operation that had existed between the Agency and the United Republic of Tanzania since the latter had become a member in 1976. As a result of that co-operation, his country had not only achieved many successes in the field of the use of nuclear techniques, but had also established a sound national radiation protection infrastructure and would be in a position that year to announce

the complete eradication of tsetse-fly from the Island of Zanzibar, which should open the way to spectacular agricultural development. In addition, Member States, thanks to the Agency and other bodies, had managed to halt, at least temporarily, horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Prospects for implementation of an effective and verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, leading at the very least to talks on total nuclear disarmament, were becoming more and more favourable.

144. The increase in the demand for energy, particularly in the developing countries and even in LDCs such as the United Republic of Tanzania, meant that nuclear energy, in the light of the increasing concern for the environment, would remain a significant source of power and would contribute appreciably to alleviating the greenhouse effect. It was for that reason that his delegation wished to emphasize that countries should make a proper review of the role of nuclear energy and that the issue should continue to be debated at international level. In that regard, the Agency's Secretariat should pursue its efforts to promote a proper appreciation of the contribution that nuclear energy could make to sustainable development. The United Republic of Tanzania wished the Agency to extend the scope of its activities in the promotion of the use of nuclear power and in related safety procedures, particularly in the developing countries. The intensification of research and development work on small, low-cost units with a high intrinsic safety level was a step in the right direction.

145. His delegation wished again to express its deep gratitude for the technical assistance provided to the United Republic of Tanzania. It greatly appreciated the results achieved in 1997 in Africa under the technical co-operation programme, results which were entirely consistent with the objectives of the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa. Those achievements confirmed the Agency's commitment to support, on the basis of guidelines set by its Member States, the endeavours of developing countries, particularly in Africa, to accelerate the process of technology transfer and to achieve sustainable development. His delegation emphasized the need to put funding for technical co-operation on a sound footing in order to enable the Department of Technical Co-operation to plan its future programmes. It also appreciated the Agency's efforts to increase the effectiveness of its technical co-operation activities. The very commendable initiatives taken in that context included the introduction of concepts such as Model Projects, Partners in Development, and Country Programme Frameworks. Further consultations on the basis of the Country Programme Frameworks should be useful in ensuring that technical co-operation funds were used in the most cost-effective way possible, and that appropriate projects were selected for developing countries.

146. The support that the Agency was giving to regional initiatives such as ARCAL, the RCA and AFRA, as well as to the regional projects under its technical co-operation programme, clearly showed its keen interest in encouraging and strengthening regional co-operation. Such initiatives, which would ultimately make it possible to ensure optimal use of the limited available resources and would have a positive impact on science and technology in participating countries, should be encouraged.

147. The United Republic of Tanzania greatly valued the strenuous efforts made by the Agency and its Member States to increase the efficiency of safeguards and noted with appreciation the endorsement of the Model Protocol, which would give the Agency additional powers. However, if the new strengthened safeguards system was to be effective, it would have to be applied without discrimination to all parties to the NPT. The new system should also be a new incentive to nuclear-weapons States to accelerate efforts towards total nuclear disarmament.

148. There was an urgent need for the Agency to reorient its long-term policy in order to respond to the challenges of the twenty-first century and better mechanisms should be developed for setting priorities and strengthening activities for achieving those priorities within the limits of available resources. He called on Member States to support the Agency in those efforts.

149. The United Republic of Tanzania believed that there was need for a better balance between the Agency's regulatory and promotional activities. The majority of Member States, particularly those in the course of development, expected tangible results from the peaceful applications of nuclear energy in support of their development programmes. However, Agency activities to promote the beneficial uses of nuclear energy did not currently seem to be accorded the same importance as regulatory activities. It was to be hoped that the Agency would soon succeed in striking a balance between the two. After all, no one would wish to see a situation in which the developing countries began to question the advantages of membership of an organization whose activities were essentially regulatory.

150. Mr. TWAL (Jordan), after congratulating the new Director General and paying tribute to his predecessor, said that the Agency had strengthened international co-operation in the field of nuclear technology through the drawing up of conventions such as the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. Those measures were particularly essential as nuclear activities and tests, accidents and the various peaceful applications of nuclear energy had resulted in an accumulation of radioactive waste over the years that had become a source of environmental pollution. The Agency was also called upon to take advantage of the peace process in the Middle East in order to establish its safeguards system in the region, make it a nuclear-weapon-free zone and eliminate from it all weapons of mass destruction.

151. With regard to technical co-operation, he emphasized the importance of developing human resources in the developing countries, particularly in relation to the maintenance and repair of nuclear equipment. In that connection, it might be useful to set up regional centres to strengthen the relevant national capabilities. In order to preserve the Department of Technical Co-operation's efficiency and flexibility, the financing of technical co-operation should not come under the Agency's Regular Budget. It was to be hoped that the technical co-operation budget would be increased constantly and consistently.

152. Potable water was one of the main problems facing the developing countries: it was a rare commodity, and the shortage was aggravated by increasing demand due to population growth and economic development. The desalination of sea water was one of the possible options and Jordan was in favour of plans to produce potable water economically by nuclear methods and considered that it would be even more appropriate to use nuclear reactors to produce both electricity and potable water.

153. With regard to the amendment of Article VI of the Statute, the need for equitable representation of the regions of Africa and the Middle East and South Asia on the Board of Governors was all the more inescapable as the Member States of those regions had made significant progress in the nuclear field. He therefore hoped that a definitive decision would be taken at the current session of the General Conference.

154. The Arab Atomic Energy Agency, which had its headquarters in Tunis, was a regional body providing scientific and technical services in the field of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. However, the volume and quality of assistance provided were limited by the lack of financial resources. Jordan therefore called on the Agency to increase its support to that body.

155. He appealed to all Member States to pay their contributions on time and noted that his country had paid its contribution for 1997 and was preparing to fulfil all its financial obligations to the Agency by paying its contributions to the Regular Budget and the TCF for 1998.

156. Mr. ROMAN-MOREY (Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean), congratulated Mr. Blix, on behalf of the OPANAL Council, very warmly on his effective leadership of the Agency over the past 16 years, a period which, after the terror of the Cold War in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, had been marked by extremely positive results in the nuclear field. International disarmament agreements concluded during that period had only been possible because they had gone hand in hand with the promotion of the controlled and verifiable use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, which was the Agency's main task. He recalled that nuclear energy had become known to the public in the most disastrous way possible. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had not only produced hundreds of thousands of victims, but had also destroyed the image of a wonderful form of energy which should only have been used for the good of humanity. In the 40 years of its existence, the Agency had served to rebuild part of that image.

157. The Tlatelolco Treaty had been the first international instrument to express the sovereign will of its parties never to possess nuclear weapons, while emphasizing the need to use nuclear energy for exclusively peaceful purposes in their region, and had defined mechanisms for collaboration with the Agency in carrying out tasks relating to safeguards and nuclear safety.

158. The Tlatelolco Treaty would not have been complete without the full participation of those States in the region which were the most developed in the nuclear field. With the firm political will of the States concerned, and thanks to the constant support of the Agency and

the personal participation of Mr. Blix, significant amendments had been made to the initial text of the Treaty. The personal efforts made by Mr. Blix and his colleagues, together with the Secretariat General of OPANAL, had also made it possible for the Tlatelolco Treaty to be the first international treaty to express and implement, in all countries of the region with one exception, the will of the parties never to possess nuclear weapons. The region could proudly declare that it had been the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in the world and its example had been followed by others. The Rarotonga Treaty for the South Pacific, the Bangkok Treaty for South East Asia and the Pelindaba Treaty for Africa meant that a total of 110 countries had undertaken not to use nuclear energy for military purposes. Furthermore, other regions of the world had taken initiatives to set up such zones, and OPANAL and the Agency had an important role to play in that respect.

159. He particularly thanked Mr. Blix for the support he had given to the Secretariat General of OPANAL in organizing the regional seminar on nuclear safeguards held in Kingston (Jamaica) in 1996 and also for his constant assistance. On the occasion of his retirement, the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean offered him their gratitude and warmest appreciation, and their best wishes for a long life, success and happiness.

160. On behalf of OPANAL, he also warmly congratulated the future Director General, Mr. ElBaradei, on his election. His great organizational qualities, his recognized diplomatic and legal prestige and his considerable experience of the Agency would ensure that his efforts were crowned with success.

161. On 14 February 1997, OPANAL had celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of its founding. The main events organized in honour of that anniversary had been a seminar on nuclear-weapon-free zones in the next century, co-sponsored by OPANAL, the Mexican Government and UNIDIR, and a special commemorative session of the OPANAL General Conference. For the first time in the history of OPANAL, all the signatory States, associated States, and States and international organizations with observer status had been represented.

162. Reviewing the main measures adopted at the fifteenth ordinary session of the OPANAL General Conference held in July 1997 in Mexico, he said that the most important had been the decision to continue to seek new activities to be carried out by OPANAL within the framework of the mandate given to it by the Tlatelolco Treaty, taking account of current world realities and, in particular, the increasing desire of the international community to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones.

163. A new era was beginning, the world was continuing to change and the action taken by the international community through the intermediary of its regional or international institutions had to be decisive. As Mr. ElBaradei had said in his statement, the peaceful use of nuclear energy contributed effectively to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the Agency might one day be able to verify the total elimination of weapons throughout the world.

164. Mr. BARAKAT (Arab Atomic Energy Agency) said that his organization, which had its headquarters in Tunis, focused its activities on improving human resources in the field of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. Its work was mainly conducted in Arabic

and included the organization of training programmes, symposia, expert meetings and seminars, as well as the publication of scientific documents on the various aspects of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

165. The Arab Atomic Energy Agency co-operated with the IAEA, as shown by the organization of a nine-week training course on radiation protection in Arabic, which was soon to be held in Damascus. In that connection, he emphasized the importance of the use of Arabic in training programmes. At present, the Arab Atomic Energy Agency was co-operating with the IAEA in connection with a programme for developing a standard set of regulations in Arabic for radiation protection, which would be the subject of an Arab expert meeting in December 1997.

166. Recalling that representatives of his organization had participated in the work of the expert advisory groups on small- and medium-power reactors and the nuclear desalination of sea water, he noted that the IAEA attended the conferences of the Arab Atomic Energy Agency and that the two organizations exchanged publications. He welcomed that co-operation and hoped to see it further strengthened.

167. Mr. HEZZAH (League of Arab States) said that the League, which was linked to the Agency by a co-operation agreement, was working tirelessly to make the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. It called on the international community to support its efforts and on Israel to accede to the NPT without delay and to place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive Agency safeguards, prior to the denuclearization of the Middle East, which would help strengthen peace in the region. The Agency's Director General was therefore requested to increase his contacts with the countries of the region in order to accelerate that process.

168. He hoped that the Agency would continue to contribute further to international security by strengthening the safeguards system and verification activities and through international co-operation in the area of nuclear safety and radioactive waste disposal. He also hoped that the Agency's role in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy and in technical assistance would be strengthened.

The meeting rose at 7 p.m.